

Alfred Taylor
T W E L V E
Dissertations
O U T O F
Monfieur Le Clerk's
GENESIS,
C O N C E R N I N G

The { *Hebrew Tongue.*
Manner of Interpreting the Bible.
Author of the Pentateuch.
Temptation of Eve by the Serpent;
Flood.
Confusion of Languages.
Original of Circumcision.
Divine Appearances in the Old Testament.
Subversion of Sodom.
Pillar of Salt.
Coming of Shiloh.
Several Obscure Texts in Genesis Explained
and Illustrated.

Done out of Latin by Mr. BROWN.

To which is Added,
A Dissertation concerning the *Israelites* Passage through the *Red Sea*, By another Hand.

Ornari res ipsa negat, contenta docere. HOR.

LONDON, Printed and are to be Sold by
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THE HISTORY

OF THE
JEWISH NATIONS

AND THE
CHRISTIAN NATIONS

FROM THE
FIRST
TO THE
LAST
OF THE
JEWISH
NATIONS
AND THE
CHRISTIAN
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TO THE
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OF THE
JEWISH
NATIONS
AND THE
CHRISTIAN
NATIONS

By
J. G. G. G.
LONDON:
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J. G. G. G.
in the Strand, 1800.

THE
PREFACE
TO THE
READER.

THE following Dissertations contain such Variety of Learning, and Liberty of Thought, out of the common road of Commentators, and Divines (who generally confine themselves within the Rules and Pale of the Church) that the Publishing of them in English was thought necessary for the instructing and polishing of those, who employ their happy Hours in the Study of the Holy Scriptures. 'Tis true, Two very Reverend Prelates of our own Church have lately treated of these Matters not without Reflecting on the Author Mr. Le Clerc; yet 'tis no ill manners to cloath him in the same

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Language, that the Justice and Reason of their Contempt and Accusations may the more clearly appear.

I am not insensible of the many Calumnies fixt on the Learned Author upon the account of these Dissertations, and the Letters he formerly Publish'd concerning Inspiration, and the Lives of some Fathers, yet his late Treatise of the Causes of Incredulity, and the Truth of Christianity; hath dissipated all those Aspersions, and demonstrates to the World, that he could never give any occasion to Infidels or Unbelievers to insult the simplicity of the Gospel, or the Lines of the Church; 'tis maliciously suggested, that he hath forgot to reckon his own Writings amongst his many Causes of Deism, and Scepticism; for tho in his Juvenile Pastimes at Saumur, and Geneva, he might sow some wild Tares, and run beyond the bounds of Discretion in Matters of Faith; yet by culture and ripeness of years, he arriv'd at that strength and presence of mind, that all his Productions became chaste, and very charming, insomuch that the Illustrious City of Amsterdam adopted him into the Number of her Professors, where he adorns the Oriental Chair, and deserves to shine in a more Noble Sphere; but the Climate, we live in, is too gross to receive such a fine and exalted Genius, born to illuminate the dark Mysteries of Antiquity, and to let us into the Sanctum Sanctorum; for certainly never any Mortal came better

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better prepar'd to unveil the Beauty of the Scriptures; many great Endowments meeting in him; a singular Penetration, vast reading and Study, a profound skill in the Languages with an universal erudition, a clear Judgment, an honest Candor, and a Sublimity above Party or Faction; Talents not very common among Those who have the Honour to unlock those Venerable Archives.

The Bible without dispute contains more good Morals, and more hidden Treasures than all the Volumes of the Alexandrian, the Vatican, or Bodleian Libraries, and therefore our Libertines have no reason to deride the pains taken to open them.

But some cry out aloud, there lurks a Snake under the Grass, and Venom sprouts out of the Mouth of the tempting Serpent; Beware of his winding Insinuations, and his gentle Turnings. Oh incurable Jealousie! that will not distinguish between Superstition and Religion, between Godliness, and Gain, or between the Ancient and Modern Christianity. A Man must be of a very sower habit of Body, that will not bear an innocent Freedom, especially in an Age and Kingdom, where Nullius in Verba is the Motto.

Criticks and Philosophers have always claim'd a particular sort of Liberty, and Boldness, which the wisest States have thought fit to dispense with; for Truth is not easily come at, many rubs and thorns lying in the way, so that few work thro'

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thro' it. Therefore the same Indulgence, that hath been granted to Selden, Grotius, Bochart, Marsham, F. Simons, Spencer, and Others in their Observations upon the Hebrews, and in all their Oriental Enquiries, may also reasonably be expected for Monsieur Le Clerk, who often refuses upon them all, and keeps within the Decorum, which a Wise Man would never exceed.

What hath been said for the Philological Part may extend to the Physical, in which if M. Le Clerk hath offended any nice and delicate Scrupulosity, He hath many Orthodox Predecessors in the same kind, both beyond the Seas, and in this Country, not to name any more than Bishop Wilkins, Seth Ward, Isaac Vossius, the Learned Bishop of Worcester, the celebrated Master of the Charter-House, who Apologizes very ingeniously for so doing; but there is a sort of Men, who cannot endure any dissent from Moses his Philosophy, (unless it be in themselves) and pretend to steer exactly according to the Mosaick Chart in all their Systems; yet so unfortunate are they, that they frequently run upon the same Sands and Rocks, where they have split others; Clodius accusat Marchum, Catilina Cethegum; and such is the luck of these upright Authors, who very awkwardly strain the Phantomes of their own Brains into the Old Testament, that they put all into confusion, and had better let it rest in Sacred Silence; the Church would do well to enjoyn such Writers, not to weave their own Tords with

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with those of Moses, lest the old Neph should be lost, and a party-colour'd Coat appear in its room. What a monstrous Mosaic dress have we in Whiston's Theory with a train of Gamets at his Tail; in Woodward's Essay with all the Mountains down about his Heels; in Nicholl's Conference with multitudes of Arts, or new Miracles of preserving in, or else creating de novo after the Flood, and with his Lyons in Greenland.

Gens ratione furens, & mentem pestis
Chimæris.

'Tis wonderful that these Men should venture to beat up the ~~un~~erof'd Solitudes of a Carthusian, (who never hunts after the common prey of Dominion and Wealth, as being inconsistent with our Blessed Saviour's Kingdom) and at the same time expose themselves to the prosecutions of every vulgar Eye; but with this difference, that he bath left Moses pure, free, and undefiled as he found him, whereas they have polluted him with their own mixtures, and make him act what part they please, in any habit, or under any mask, as best serves their Scenes and Opera's. How shall the Children of Israel know their true Moses, so patch'd and disfigur'd with the borrowed Plumes of such Birds of Paradise. The Apostle gave good advice against the vain Philosophy of these Men, who corrupt the Scriptures by introducing their own Chimerical Hypotheses into them, that
thereby

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thereby they may stamp them Standard, and cry down all others as Counterfeit, of base alloy, or of false weight. 'Tis to be wish'd that this infamous piece of Quackery was banish'd out of Parnassus, and that Apollo admonish'd his Subjects to treat one another in modest and bumble Manners, avoiding the haughty Titles of Supremacy and Infalibility; for Opinion and Probability cannot be a certain Rule, or any Foundation to domineer over one another. Monsieur Le Clerk may be allow'd to be as good an Interpreter as any Prelate in Christendom; and Dr. Burnet as great a Friend to Moses as any Chaplain or Vertuoso in England.

Glory to God in the highest,

Peace on Earth,

Good Will among Men.

Dissertation

Dissertation I.

Concerning the Hebrew Tongue.

- I. *The Design of these Dissertations.* II. *That the Hebrew Tongue is no more the Primitive, than any of the other Oriental Languages.* III. *That the Difference of Languages arose from the Dispersion of Mankind.* IV. *That Abraham spoke the Chaldean Tongue.* V. *That Hebrew was originally the Language of the Canaanites.* VI. *That it was a barren ambiguous Language, and carried but to a small Perfection by the Israelites.* VII. *In what Condition it was after the Babylonian Captivity.* VIII. *What Care the Israelites at that time took of the Sacred Volumes.*

ALTHO' 'tis not my Intention in these Preliminary Discourses to ramble through all those common Places, which relate to the Old Testament in General, yet I thought it improper to put a Treatise of this Nature into the Reader's hand, without any foregoing Address or Ceremony. As I was frequently obliged to set down several
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things in my Annotations for known or granted, because I could not prove them there at large, without running into perpetual Digressions, which I always studiously avoided; so I judged it *à propos* to handle and prove them more copiously in these Dissertations, lest the prejudiced Reader should imagine that I have all along built upon a precarious Foundation. Now the things which I barely deliver'd in my Comments without farther Proof, may be chiefly reduced to these three Heads: 1. The Hebrew Tongue. 2. The Method I follow'd in my Interpretation. 3. Whether *Moses* was the Author of the Pentateuch, and what end he propos'd to himself in writing. I shall begin with that concerning the Hebrew Tongue, and manage the other Points as they follow in order. But before I proceed any farther, the Reader is to be informed, that I never designed to discuss all the Questions that are usually propos'd concerning that Language, but only such as are of absolute Necessity towards the better understanding of my Commentary, which I shall handle just as they come into my Head, without confining my self too Religiously to Method and Regularity: Therefore he is not to expect any compleat elaborate Discourse at my hands, which I neither promise here, nor ever had it so much as in my Thoughts to perform.

II. The Jews out of a Fond Affection to their own Country, and several Christians who are apt

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apt to be too much influenced by them, commonly pretend, that the Hebrew Language was that which *Adam*, the first Parent of Mankind, spoke. The most plausible Argument for which Opinion, is deduced from a few Names and Etymologies; but tho' the Maintainers of it boast, that they put the Matter beyond all Dispute, yet I am inclined to believe, they are not so Invincible as 'tis pretended. To which purpose 'twill be necessary to hear the full Merits of the Cause, before we proceed to give Sentence.

1. In the first place they alledge the Name of the first Man *Adam*, which in the Hebrew Tongue alone alludes to the word *Earth*, out of which his Body was form'd, for only the Jews call the Earth *Adama*. This *Paronomasia* or Similitude of Names, plainly appears in the second Chapter of *Genesis* verse 7. *Et formavit Jehova Deus Adam pulverem ex Adama, hoc est, terrâ.* The *Chaldees* indeed have the word *Adam*, but then they call the Earth *Arbab*, which Term has no Affinity with the name of our first Parent.

2. For the same reason *Eve's* Name *Havah* is derived from the word *Hbaj*, Living, because she was the Mother of all *Hbaj*, Living, *Gen.* 3. 20. Now this Etymology is corrupted in the *Chaldee*, which renders it *chol bne enascha*, of all the Sons of Men.

3. So in the second Chapter of *Genesis*, v. 23. She, says *Adam* speaking of his Wife, *shall be called*

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called *Ischah, Woman*, because *Meisch, she is taken out of Man*. Therefore since this chiming of the words is to be found in no other Language but this, they conclude that it was unquestionably the very same that *Adam* spoke.

4. After *Abel* was kill'd, *Seth* was born to our first Mother, *Eve*, whose name she derives from a *Radix* in the Hebrew Tongue, *Gen. 4. 25*. She call'd his name *Scheth*; For, says she, *God has raised me up, Schath, another Son in the room of Abel*.

These and several other Names are brought by the *Rabbies*, to prove, as they imagine, that Hebrew is the Primitive Language; and they urge them with that Assurance and Ostentation, as if 'twere down-right Obstinacy to contradict so evident a Truth; but we have many weighty Reasons on our side, to incline us to believe, that the Primitive Language was no more related to the *Hebrew*, than it was either to the *Chaldee* or *Arabick*. But that the Reader may better comprehend our Meaning, we own that Opinion seems to be most probable to us, which maintains that neither *Hebrew*, *Chaldee*, nor *Arabick*, nor indeed any other Oriental Language, was that which *Adam* spoke, because in process of Time, and by the Dispersion of Mankind, it was split into several Dialects of the Eastern Tongues, and begot the above-mentioned Languages, and some others nearly resembling them. Thus, for instance, the Language of the Old *Romans*, is neither that which the

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the *Italians*, *French* or *Spaniards* use, and yet it produced these three Languages, and has left several of its old Remainders in them. I know the *Rabbins* are of a different Opinion, who pretend that it was preserv'd unmixt and intire in the Family of *Heber*; but I shall soon demonstrate, that this is precariously affirm'd, and wants Reasons to support it.

As for what relates to the Argument borrow'd from the Etymology of Names, it is to be observ'd in the first place, that some of them are not so much proper Names given to the Children at their Birth, as *Cognomina*, or Surnames by which they were known to Posterity, and so in process of time pass'd for proper Names. For which reason they might sometimes be changed, and yet the *Paronomasia* of the Primitive Language be happily preserv'd at the same time, as will evidently appear by the following Examples.

Adam, as all the World knows, is not a proper Name, but bestow'd on the first Man, *אדם* *אֶדָם*, or by way of Pre-eminence, and so our first Father might be thus call'd by the *Hebrews*, tho' his Contemporaries call'd him otherwise. Nor is the Agreement of the words, which we confess falls out patly enough in the Hebrew Tongue, an Argument to the contrary, for therefore Man might be call'd *Adam* by the *Hebrews*, because they knew the first Man's Body was form'd of Clay. Thus in the Latin Tongue, which I believe no Man in the

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World ever dreamt to be the Primitive Language, we might say, that God call'd the first Man *Homo*, because he was form'd *ex humo*, i. e. out of the Ground. Besides the same thing might accidentally happen in the words *Isch* and *Ischah*, as amongst the ancient Latins (a) *vir* and *vira* were in use.

We might here produce the frequent Alterations of Names, even of those we call Proper, but the Reader may find them in the Learned *Grotius's* Annotations on *Gen. 11. 1*, and in *Huetius's Demonstratio Evangelica*, Propos. 4. c. 13. §. 4. We shall at present content our selves to give an Instance or two, not taken notice of by them, of an Etymology happily expressed in another Language. Every one has heard of a Famous City in *Egypt*, which the Greeks call'd Πιλύσιον, which name (for 'tis of Greek Extraction) is rightly derived ἀπὸ τῆς πηλῆς, from dirt, because it was built in a dirty place. For thus *Strabo* in his Seventeenth Book, Page 552. of the *Geneva* Edition put out by *Casaubon*, 'Αὐτὸ τὸ Πιλύσιον πόλιν περικείμενα ἔχει ἔλη, ἀπινες βάραθρα καλῆσι καὶ τέλειματι. — Ὀνόμασαι δ' ἀπὸ τῆς πηλῆς, καὶ τῆς τέλειματι.

(a) See what *Festus* in *Querquetulana vira* says, *Feminas antiqui quas nunc dicimus, Viras appellabant, unde adhuc permanent Virgines & Viragines.* St. *Jerom* uses this last word, whom herein we had no mind to imitate, because *Virago* neither signifies what *Ischa* does in Hebrew, nor *Vira* in Latin, but a Woman of a Masculine Spirit.

Now

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Now if the Books of the Hebrew Prophets were all lost, Who would not Swear that this City had no other Name? Who would not believe that it was built by some *Greeks* that settled there, or by the Posterity of *Lagus*, and bore this Greek Name ever since its beginning. However 'tis undeniable from *Ezekiel* 30.14,15. that it was call'd *Sin* by the *Egyptians*, which word signifies *dirt*, as *Bochart* has observ'd, *Phaleg*. l. 4. c. 27.

The same has happen'd in the name of another place not far distant from *Pelufum*. *Diodorus Siculus* in the first Book of his *Bibliotheca* mightily commends *Astifanes* the *Æthiopian*, who after he had conquer'd *Amoses* King of the *Egyptians*, and subdued the whole Country, neither put the Guilty to death, nor yet wholly dismiss'd them unpunish'd, but carried multitudes of the Condemned, he thus used them, Ἀποτιμῶν αὐτῶν τὰς μυκτῆρας κατὰ μέρος ἐν τοῖς ἐχάτοις ἡ ἐρήμῳ χῶρας, κτίσας πόλιν ἢ ὀνόματι τῆ συμπτώματι. Ρινόκερας (or Ρινόκελες) προσάγορα ὠδεῖσαν. Cutting off their Noses, he transplanted them into the farthest parts of a desert Region, and built a City, and called it from this accident *Rinocolura*. *Strabo* in his sixteenth Book makes the same Remark, and so does *Stephanus* upon this word. Now those Persons that do not know, that the *Egyptians* at this time did not speak Greek, would easily suffer themselves to be perswaded, especially seeing it named among the Cities of

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Egypt, that *Rinocolura* was the very name by which this City went among the *Egyptians*.

But if any one would rather desire to see Examples fetch'd from the Holy Scriptures, he may observe how the Seventy Interpreters turn the Proper Names of the Bible into Greek, *Gen.* 11. 9. *Διὰ τὸτο ἐκλήθη τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς Σύγχυσις (Babel) ὅτι ἐκεῖ συνεχύθη πάντα τὰ ῥήματα. Therefore the name of it was called Confusion (Babel or Babylon) because there the Lord confounded the Lips of the whole Earth. See likewise Gen. 31. 47. & 32. 20.*

Nay what is highly remarkable, *Moses* has deriv'd the Original of his own Name from an Hebrew word, and has introduced the Daughter of *Pharaoh* speaking Hebrew, who without question express her self in the Egyptian Tongue, *Exod.* 2. 10. *The Child grew up, and his Nurse brought him to the Daughter of Pharaoh, who called his name Mosche; because, said she, I drew him out of the Water, Mishithithou. And the reason of it is plain, for since Moses saw he could easily imitate the Egyptian Origination in the Hebrew Tongue, he made no Scruple to bring in this Princess, expressing her self after that manner. But in the Egyptian Tongue he is called Μωυση, that is, taken out of the Water; for with the Old Egyptians Μωυ signified Water, and ση taken out. Thus in the New Testament, he that was called by the Syrians Chispha or Chepha, was called Πέτρος, Peter, by the Greeks; and so that Paronomasia, which our Saviour*

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Saviour used in the Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic, was conveniently enough translated into the Greek Tongue, *Matt. 16. 17.*

However I would by no means be thought to affirm, that the Name of *Adam*, and such-like, were changed: For it might so happen, that both the Primitives and Derivatives of the first Language were often preserved in the Hebrew: But we must not conclude from thence, that therefore *Adam* spoke pure Hebrew. There are some Names, which with equal Felicity may be deduced out of the *Chaldee*; as for instance, the Name *Hbavab*, for *Hbai* signifies *Living*, no less in *Chaldee* than it does in *Hebrew*. Nay, there are some Names which cannot Analogically be derived from the Hebrew Roots, although *Moses* deduces them from those Roots, which if we should urge, as the *Rabbins* do, to support the contrary Opinion, we should from thence conclude, that the Hebrew Tongue has no Affinity with the Language of the *Antediluvians*. Thus *Gen. 2. 1. And she brought forth Cain, and said, I have got (Kanithi) a man of the Lord.* The Name *Kajin*, according to the common Rules, ought to be deduced from *Koun*, which signifies to Lament in *Pibel*; as *Kajits* the *Summer*, from *Kouts*; *Tsaiid*, *Hunting*, from *Tsoud*; and several more of the like nature. From the Root *Kanab* we should more properly deduce *Kanovi*. Now, as we have observed, if we were minded to copy after the *Rabbins*, and follow their Conduct, we might say,

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say, That from hence 'tis evident, that the Hebrew Tongue is not the first, since *Moses* was not able to express in it the Etymology of the word *Kain*. We might gather the same from *Genesis* Chap. 5. v. 29. where the Father of *Noah* calls the Name of his Son *Noah*, saying, *he will Comfort us, Jénabbamenou*, for if we are to derive the Name of this Restorer of Mankind from *Nabbam*, we ought to have called him *Nohhem*, that is to say, a Comforter, not *Noah*, which can be deduced from nothing else but *Noah* quievit. So that if a few happy Etymologies will prove the Antediluvian Language to have been the same with the Hebrew, surely those of a different Nature will demonstrate the contrary. But since both these Propositions cannot be true, what remains, but that we should own that the Hebrew Language is not indeed the first, but the Off-spring of it; as are likewise the *Chaldee* and *Arabick*, and that some Remainers of it are still preserved in these three Dialects. True it is, that the Original of the Name of *Tubal Cain*, which is neither to be traced out of *Hebrew* nor *Chaldee*, is plainly found in the *Arabick*, as we have shewn at the third (b) Chapter v. 22. Besides

(b) 'Tis worth Observation, says our Author here, that the two words, of which this name is compounded, signifie in the Arabian *Laminam aris*, aut *ferri*; but as far as we can find by the Holy Writ, which is our only resort in this case, they are wholly unknown to the Hebrew Tongue; though, as it appears by the Context, there is no question to be made, but this is the true signification of them.

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the Etymology of the word *Babel* is more happily deduced from the *Chaldee* word *Bilbel confudit*, than from the Hebrew *Balal*, which signifies the same; for there is a greater Affinity between *Babel* and *Bilbel*, than between *Babel* and *Balal*.

But to deliver my Sentiments freely, concerning the *Antediluvian* and some other ancient Names, many of them were not so much given them as Names at their Birth to distinguish them from other Men, as they are to be looked upon as Surnames, afterwards bestowed upon them for some particular Event or Accident that befel them. And from hence it came to pass, as we have already shewn, that these Names were changed by the *Hebrews*, as 'tis certain some of them were changed by the *Arabians*. The first begotten Son of *Adam* was *Cain*, as *Moses* tells us, a *Tiller of the Ground*, which furnish'd the *Arabians* with an occasion to reckon the Lord knows who, one *Habdel bharits*, that is to say, the *Servant of a Tiller*, among the Sons of *Adam*; which rather signifies *Cain's* manner of Living, than another Son of our first Parents, as some People imagin'd. Concerning which Consult, *Schickard* in the *Pæmium* to his Catalogue of the Persian Kings. His other Son was called *Hebel*, that is, a *fading thing that soon disappears*, because he was kill'd by his Brother in his Youth. We know indeed that some Expositors have conjectur'd, that from a Prophetical Spirit this
Name

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Name was given him at his Birth by his Parents; but a bare simple Conjecture can never amount to a Demonstration. A Person of singular Piety, and consequently instructed in all the Knowledge of Divine Matters, which those Times were capable of, is called *Hbanoch* from the Verb *Hbanach*, that is, *docuit, instituit*, whence the Participle *Hbanouch*, *doctus, learned*. For this reason the same Man is called by the Arabians *Idrii*, which signifies *learned*; for *daras* with the Hebrews and Arabians, is *accuratè & subtiliter indagavit*. His Son was called in After-ages *Methouschelah*, i. e. *After his Death a breaking out*, to wit, of Waters, happened. After the Flood *Peleg*, that is, *Division* the Son of *Heber*, in whose days the Earth was divided, Chap. 10. v. 25. We have also observed on the (c) Tenth Chapter v. 8. that *Nimrod* was no very honourable Title for him to whom it was given. Perhaps we might discover several others of the like kind, if we had a fuller and larger History of those Times. But these we

(c) Monsieur le Clerk here observes, that *Nimrod* is derived from the Hebrew Radix *Marad*, to Rebel, from whence the Arabic word *Maridon* is derived, which signifies *Obstinat, Proud, or Insolent*. And such sort of a Man he must needs be, continues our Author, who first dissolved the Paternal Government, and affected a Superiority over his Brethren. I can never persuade my self, that this Name was given him as soon as he was born, no more than several other Names were given to others, which have a relation to their Disposition, or the Inventions they found out. They rather seem to be their *cognomina* or Surnames, of which their Posterity had some remembrance, when their Names were utterly forgotten.

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have cited, are more than sufficient to shew, that some of those Surnames might be changed by *Moses*.

And therefore their Argument of Primitive Antiquity, deduced barely from Names, is not of that Consequence as the *Rabbins*, and those that implicitly follow their Authority may imagine. However since the other reasons that are alledged by the Jews fall infinitely short of this, we lie under no Obligation to trifle away our time in confuting them, especially since the Vanity of them has been already demonstrated by the Learned *Huetius*.

III. There seems to have been but one Language before the Deluge: This we are sure of, that there was but one in the Family of *Noah*, till the Fantastical Project of the Building of *Babel* was set on foot, that is to say, as long as they continued all in the same place. But after that, upon the account of some Differences arising at *Babylon*, Mankind was dispersed into several Provinces of the World, and when in process of time these distant Families preserved either none, or but a small Correspondence one with another, several new Dialects sprung up. Thus we see that the Latin Tongue has given birth to the Italian, Spanish and French Tongues, not to mention the several Dialects of each of these. So the Saxon Tongue alone begot the Modern German, the Dutch and English. We have * else-
where shewn that the variety

* See this handled at large in the sixth Dissertation.

of

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of Languages did not immediately arise by any sudden miraculous Impression of the Divine Power; and indeed those that maintain the contrary Opinion, own that there was rather a variety of Dialects, than of new Tongues.

Therefore the Primitive or first Language has upon several accounts been changed; as for instance, it was turn'd by the *Arabians* into the *Arabick*, by the *Chaldees* it was wrested into the *Chaldean*, and by the *Canaanites* insensibly changed into the *Canaanish* Dialect. The Jews, who sanctified it to be the Hebrew Tongue, pretend it remain'd without Change or Corruption in the Family of *Heber*, which nevertheless is no where attested in the Holy Scripture. Nay, on the other side, it sufficiently intimates, that the Posterity of *Heber*, who continued on the other side the *Euphrates*, rather spoke *Chaldee*, as we shall see anon.

Since therefore the *Rabbins* are not able to produce one positive Testimony out of the Bible, to prove that the Antediluvian Language came down intire and incorrupted to the Descendants of *Heber*, they endeavour, which is the last Refuge of a declining Cause, to evince it by far-fetch'd Reasons. They pretend that neither *Heber* nor his Son *Peleg*, from whom the *Israelites* are lineally descended, were concerned in building the Tower of *Babel*. But this is a downright Dream, supported by no manner of reason, as we have shewn in our sixth Dissertation.

First,

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First, They pretend that the Family of *Cham*, assisted by some of the Posterity of *Shem* and *Japhet*, fell upon this design, and that *Nimrod* was the chief Surveyor and Encourager of the Work, which they gather chiefly from *Gen.* 10. 9, 10. where *Babel*, *Erech*, *Accad* and *Chalne* in the Land of *Sinaar*, are said to be the beginning of *Nimrod's Kingdom*. But nothing more can be evinced from hence, but only that *Nimrod*, after the rest of Mankind had quitted *Babylon*, continued there still with his Family, and was either the Master or Founder of those Cities. Secondly, They mightily inveigh against the Impiety of the Builders of *Babel* in most Tragical Strains, and thence conclude that the Godly Patriarchs, of which number *Heber* was one, were not engaged in that wicked Design: But we have shewn, that though for certain reasons God Almighty was pleased to disapprove the Design, yet there was no Wickedness in it. Besides I would fain know who it was inform'd the Jews that *Heber* was so Pious and Godly a Person? I am sure his Piety is no where commended; nay on the contrary, *Abraham's* Ancestors who liv'd on the other side the *Euphrates*, are not obscurely charged with Idolatry in (*d*) *Joshua* 24. 2. Thirdly, They

(*d*) The Passage in *Joshua* is this, *Your Fathers dwell on the other side of the Flood in old time, even Terah the Father of Abraham, and the Father of Nachor, and they served Other Gods*. And indeed the old Jews derived the beginning of their Religion from *Abraham*, who as *Josephus* tells us, lib. 1. c. 8. of his Jewish Antiquities, *Peſer* & *Tellus* was the first that had the Courage to profess one God the Creator of all things.

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pretend that the Posterity of *Heber* escaped the Punishment which this bold Attempt drew upon the rest of Mankind, since they always preserved the Hebrew Language in its Primitive Purity and Perfection. But we need not now repeat, that the Language, which afterwards was called the *Hebrew*, can with no more pretence set up for the first Tongue than the *Chaldee*, for we hope we have already demonstrated that Point, but I would fain ask them a few questions, If *Heber* and his Sons had no share in this Transgression (if it deserve that name) how happened it that the Posterity of *Joktan*, who was the Son of *Heber* above-mentioned, came to speak Arabick? How came it to pass, that most of the Children of *Shem*, who, as they pretend, was none of the Builders of *Babel*, that his Children, I say, who settled beyond the *Euphrates*, either spoke *Chaldee* or some other Language more remote from the Hebrew? In a word, whatever the *Rabbins* impudently prate of the Hebrew Tongue's being preserv'd in one Family, it is, in my Opinion, the Product of their own empty lying Brains, which in all Ages of the World were known to be Famous for inventing of Fables, and *Heber's* Posterity liable to the common Fate of the rest of Mankind, as they came to be scatter'd into various Regions, so no doubt of it but they expressed their meaning in different Sounds.

If

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If we should then enquire, what was the Language that *Abraham* spoke on the other side the *Euphrates*, (letting bare Conjectures, or rather Rabbinical Comments alone) the most probable Opinion is, That he spoke that Language which not long after was received in those places, I mean the *Chaldee*. He lived till the seventyeth Year of his Life, perhaps, at *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, whither one of his Ancestors went and settled, after Mankind had resolved to seek their Fortunes in different Countries. Afterwards he continued for some time at *Haran* in *Mesopotamia*.

Now 'tis manifest beyond all Dispute, that *Chaldee* was spoke in these places, in the days of *Jacob* the Grand-child of *Abraham*; for in *Gen.* 31. 47. *Laban* is said to have called a heap of Stones erected in remembrance of the Covenant he made with *Jacob*, *Jegar schaba dautba*, which words are merely *Chaldee*, and signify the *Heap of Witness*. Nor does the Language of his Grand-father *Nachir* seem to be any other than this, because Languages do not use to change in so short a course of time; for 'tis to no purpose to say that the Posterity of *Peleg* preserved the Hebrew Tongue among themselves, since no reason can be assigned, why *Laban*, who descended from him, as well as *Abraham*, spoke the Chaldean Tongue, while the rest of the Gentiles spoke another. Besides if the Hebrew Language was in use among the Descendants of *Peleg* beyond *Euphrates*, certainly

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tainly some remainders of it would be shewn us, since 'tis an undeniable Truth, that the Arabian or Chaldean Dialect was spoken on the East of *Euphrates*. In short, no tolerable cause can be assigned, why only *Abraham's* Family should preserve the old Language in *Canaan*, and propagate it to his Posterity, and yet the other Children of *Peleg* in *Mesopotamia* should utterly forget it, and learn a new Dialect. As the Posterity of *Peleg*, that fixt their Habitations beyond the *Euphrates*, had frequent Inter-marrages with the Inhabitants of those places, so likewise the Children of *Abraham* not only took them Wives out of their Father's Family, as *Isaac* and *Jacob* did, but also married *Canaanitish* Women, as is evident by the Example of *Jacob's* Sons.

The Sacred Writers expressly tell us, that in the following Ages, on the North and South of *Mesopotamia*, the Syrian Tongue was spoken, which the Jews did not understand; but we are no where told, that they were ignorant of the Language of their Neighbours the *Canaanites*. At the same time I do not deny but that there may be different Dialects in one and the same Language, as we find by experience in all Modern Tongues, but still those Dialects are understood by all the Neighbours.

When *Sennacherib* Monarch of *Assyria*, that is to say, King not only of the Nations beyond the *Tygris*, but likewise of the *Upper-Mesopotamia*, sent an Ambassador to *Heczekiah* King of *Judah*,

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Judah, to stir up the People to a Rebellion; *Ezekiel's* Courtiers thus address themselves to him, because he talked in Hebrew. *Speak, we pray thee, to thy Servant, in the Aramean or Syrian Language, for we understand it; but talk not to us in Hebrew, lest the People that are upon the Wall should hear.* *2 Kings 18. 26.* It also appears out of *Daniel, Esdras* and *Nehemiah*, that the Chaldean Tongue was spoken at *Babylon*. *Nabobodonosor, Dan. 2. 4.* commands some Youths to be chosen out of the Jewish Nobility, that were carried to *Babylon* to be instructed in the Learning and Language of the Chaldeans. So likewise *Jeremiah* speaks of the Chaldeans, *Chap. 5. 15.* *Behold, says the Lord, I will bring a Nation upon you from afar, O House of Israel, which is a powerful Nation, and an ancient Nation, a Nation whose Language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say.*

But no where do we find any like this kind of those Nations that were situated between the *Mediterranean Sea* and the *Jordan*. The Dialects of the neighbouring People were indeed easie to be distinguished from the Jewish Tongue, as *Nehemiah* particularly tells us of that of *Assyria* and some others, *Chap. 13. 24.* but 'tis no where affirmed, that they were not understood by the Jews.

V. Having thus shewn that Hebrew was neither the Primitive Tongue, nor preserved in the Family of *Heber*, nor yet *Abraham's* Mother-Tongue, it now remains for me to enquire

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where it was spoken; To give my own Opinion freely, though it is different from that of several Learned Men, who therein agree with the Jews, I suppose it was the Language of *Canaan*, and that the Posterity of *Abraham* learnt it between the *Mediterranean Sea* and the *Jordan*, but by no means brought it thither out of *Chaldea*; neither can I discover after the severest Examination, the least Absurdity in this Opinion; for here we have a *Chaldean* remove himself with his whole Family into another Country, and having past the *Euphrates* and *Jordan*, wanders up and down *Canaan* for a hundred years, enters into Covenant with the old Inhabitants, acquires a prodigious Wealth among them, marries several Concubines, gets Children, lives to mighty Credit and Reputation, and consequently has frequent Conversations with them. Now after all this, Can any one think it strange, that he learnt a Language which has so great an Affinity with his own Mother-Tongue, and that his whole Family conform'd themselves in their Speech to the Natives of the Place. Add to this, That *Isaac* passed his whole, and *Jacob* the better part of his Life among them, that the Children of them both were brought up in the same Country, and had their Wives from thence. So that upon a due Survey of the matter, it had been a downright Miracle if they had still preserved the *Chaldean Tongue*. So little reason have we to wonder, that the *Canaanitish* Language became familiar to these People.

And

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And therefore I look upon that Opinion to be ill grounded, which supposes that the *Israelites* spoke a different Language from the People of *Canaan*. 'Tis certain that *Isaiab* plainly calls Hebrew the Language of *Canaan*, Chap. 9. 18. *In that day, says he, there shall be five Cities in the Land of Egypt which shall speak the Lip of Canaan; which is all one as if he had said, the Language of Canaan.* For the word *Lip*, both there, and in *Gen. 11. 1.* signifies *Speech*, because the Lips are no less servicable in speaking, than the Tongue it self.

Nor is this Opinion supported by bare Probability, or to be called a Conjecture merely deduced from the Name, for *Bochart*, in the second Book of his *Canaan*, Chap. 1. has fully demonstrated it to be grounded upon Truth, which we shall lay down before the Reader in a few words, because in some Particulars we dissent from that admirable Man. His first and strongest Argument to prove the Language of the *Canaanites* to be the same with that of the *Hebrews*, is brought from the Names of Men and Places, which are purely *Hebrew*. *N. Fuller* in the fourth Book of his *Miscellanies*, Chap. 4. maintains the contrary Opinion: *Though I grant,* says he, *all those names to be purely Hebrew, yet I deny that any of them were Canaanitish names, or given by those People; I rather believe that the old names that were imposed by the Canaanites, the Primitive Inhabitants of that Country, were afterwards pronounced and expounded by the Hebrews,*

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Hebrews, who succeeded them in that Land, after the Hebrew manner. Which Hypothesis, were it true, no Argument could be formed out of the Antediluvian Names to prove the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, and yet *Fuller* would not willingly grant this, nor indeed any of the Patrons of this Opinion. But in truth this is no better than a Chimæra, to which the Holy Scriptures give not the least Countenance; for though we should allow that some of these words were disguised with a Hebrew Sound and Termination, yet who can imagine that all of them were served after this manner, and that neither *Moses* nor *Joshua* should in one single Line inform us, that they changed all the names, before the *Israelites* possessed themselves of the Land of *Canaan*. Now besides that this is altogether Incredible and without President, there are two things that demonstrate it to be absolutely False. One is, That *Moses* and *Joshua* give us an account of the Alteration made in several Names, by which it appears, that this was the particular Case of some few Cities, and not common to them all. Consult *Gen.* 23. 2. as also *Numb.* 32. 38. and *Joshua* 15. 13. 14. 2. 19. 47. The other is, That not only the names of those Cities in the Possession of the *Israelites* are of Hebrew Extraction, but also of the neighbouring places which they had not subdued, as *Gaza*, *Askelon*, *Gath*, *Ekron*, *Asdod*, which belonged to the *Philistines*, *Tyrus*, *Sidon*, *Beeroth*, &c.

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The Second Argument to prove the Canaan Original of the Hebrew Tongue is deduced from hence, That though the Sacred Writers expressly tell us, that several of the neighbouring Nations were of a Language different from the *Hebrews*, yet there is not the least thing like this said of the *Canaanites*: We have already taken notice that this was frequently observed of the *Chaldeans*. The People of *Egypt* are called *Labez*, *Psalms* 114. 1. that is to say *Barbarous*; besides there was an Interpreter between *Joseph*, who pretended himself to be an *Egyptian*, and his Brethren, see *Gen.* 42. 23. likewise *Psalms* 81. 6. In the mean time, though the *Hebrews* maintained such frequent Correspondences with the *Canaanites*, and transacted so much Business with them from *Abraham* down to *Josue*, yet we find not the least mention of an Interpreter passing between them.

The Third Argument arises from the very use of the Interpreter whom *Joseph* employed; for if only *Jacob's* Family spoke Hebrew, How was it possible for *Joseph* to get an Interpreter? He could have no other but some Fugitive Servant, who would have soon known both *Joseph* and his Brethren.

The Fourth is by *Boschart*, derived from the Remains of the Phœnician Tongue, which in the second Book of his *Canaan*, he amply demonstrates to be purely Hebrew.

We shall add a Fifth, which proceeds from the manifest Footsteps of *Paganism*, that are easily

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easily to be traced in this Language. For since Tongues are Images of the Sentiments of our Mind, and are form'd and modell'd according to the Opinion of those People that use them; it cannot otherwise happen, but that the common Speech of any Country, must derive a great Tincture from the received Opinions of the Inhabitants. Thus learned Criticks have observed, that the *Arabians* have more than five hundred names for a Lyon, more than a thousand for a Sword, two hundred at least for a Serpent, and fourscore for Honey. The reason of it is, because the *Arabians* use frequently to talk of these things, since their Country is so pester'd with Lyons and Serpents, is inhabited by a Warlike People, and abounds in Honey. 'Tis an easie matter to observe both in the Greek and Latin Tongues, though we were destitute of all other Arguments, which are indeed innumerable, that the Greeks and Latins were of Opinion, that the Gods beheld the Actions of Mankind, and were Faithful Witnesses of the Truth, from those frequent Forms of Swearing, which they used so everlastingly in all their Conversations.

I will not give my self the Trouble to confirm a Truth, which is supported by so many Examples, not to mention the Custom of all the Modern Languages, but come immediately to the Point. The Hebrew Tongue which flourished, and was for some time cultivated by the *Canaanites*, a People who had strange Notions of

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of the Divinity, and were infected with *Polytheism*, retain'd several visible Footsteps of those Errors, even after it became the Mother-Tongue of the *Hebrews*, who had quite different Sentiments. The *Phœnicians* not only believed a Plurality of Gods, but ranked several Men in the number of their Deities (as *Eusebius* tells us *Præp. Evang.* l. i. c. 6.) and therefore more frequently made use of the word *Elohim*, which is of the Plural Number, than the Singular *Eloha* God, which we see still continued in the Hebrew Language, though they maintain'd the contrary Opinion, and were always zealous Assertors of one God. Hence it comes to pass, that sometimes they joyn a Verb in the Singular Number to it, pursuant to their own Notions of the Unity of God; and sometimes in the Plural, after the manner of their Neighbours, though they only meant one God by it, see *Gen.* i. i. Chap. 20. 13. and our (e) Annotations on those places. 'Tis also observable, that the same word *Elohim* does not only signify the Supream God, but likewise Angels and Magistrates. The reason of which is plain, Be-

(e) Monsieur *le Clerc* is of opinion, that the Hebrews spoke the same Language with the Inhabitants of *Palæstina*, an Idolatrous People, so they borrowed this Fashion of speaking *Elohim*, i. e. in the Plural Number of God from them, though pursuant to their own Opinion, of the Unity of God, they attributed only a Singular Signification to a Plural word. Therefore 'tis not to be wonder'd at, that sometimes they joyn'd a singular Verb to the word *Elohim*, as *Gen.* i. i. as having a greater regard to the Sense of the word, than the Number of it; and at other times *ratione numeri habitâ*, add a plural Verb to it, as *Gen.* 20. 13.

cause

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cause the *Phœnicians* did not observe a sufficient distinction between God, Angels and Magistrates, since several Men were reputed as Gods by them. For otherwise if this Language had been invented; and cultivated by a People free from Idolatry, as the *Hebrews* afterwards were, they had neither communicated a name belonging to the Divine Nature to Creatures, nor had they used it plurally in their ordinary Discourses. 'Tis certain we have nothing like this in any of the Modern *European* Languages, say not in the Arabick of the *Mahometans*, who profess themselves like the *Europeans*, to be invincible Adversaries to *Polytheism*.

Every one knows that the *Hebrews* inveterately hated that Opinion, which supposes the Divinity to be *ανθρωποεις*, i. e. resembling the Humane Nature; neither is it to be imagined, that these People, who were the Worshippers of one invisible eternal God, if they had had the inventing of their own Language, would have in their common Talk so much favoured the abovementioned Opinion, from which we see most Christians now-a-days carefully abstain for the same reason. But the Holy Scriptures afford us an infinite number of Examples of this *Anthropomorphism*; and *Salam. Glassius*, a most industrious and learned Writer, bestows the longest Chapter of his Sacred Rhetorick, which is the Seventh, Tract. 1. in enumerating them: And true it is, that mention is made of God's *Soul, Face, Eyes, Ears, Nose, Mouth, Neck, Arms,*

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Arms, his right and left Hand, Fingers, Heart, Bowels, Bosom and Feet. Not is this all, for an observing Reader may find several other remarkable Instances of the *'Aphorismata* upon other Occasions. We find attributed to God *Sadness, Repentance, Anger, Hatred, Jealousie, a Knowledge*, not from Eternity and constant to it self, but acquired by Experience, *Remembrance, Forgetfulness, Laughter, Noise, Labour, Frowns, Going down, Rising up, Walking, Sleeping, Watching*, and several things of the like nature, which though they are said *more humano*, are yet to be understood *Θεωρητικῶς*, which the abovementioned Learned Author has ingeniously remark'd, whom the Reader, if he pleases, may consult himself. These frequent Examples were formerly insisted upon, and abused by the *'Aphorismata*, from whose Errors nevertheless the *Hebrews* were always free, as they were from the Idolatry of their Neighbours.

Some feeble Objections may be urged against this Opinion, but they are so effectually confuted by *Bechart*, that a Man must be incurably Obstinate, who after he has read his Reasons, will still persist in the defence of them; so that since they will fall down of their own accord, if we do but remember what has been already advanced, 'tis not necessary to dwell any longer upon them. But some body perhaps will think to affright us with the Title of *Folly*, which is a Compliment the Jews have paid upon their own Language. Now if they mean

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no more by it, but that *Holy* Laws were given them by God Almighty in that Tongue, and other most *Holy* Revelations made by the Prophets, we have no Controversie with them upon that Article; we grant it all, and urge it as well as they. God, if he had so vouchsafed, might have declared his Will in the Indian Language, but this had not conferr'd the least *Sanctity* upon the Indian Letters and Accents, nor ought the Indian Tongue to have been accounted less *Holy* for its Penury and Barrenness. Our Saviour and his Apostles revealed the most *Holy* Doctrines of the Gospel in the Galilean Tongue, which was known, but despised by those of *Jerusalem*. The Apostles also preached the Gospel to the Gentiles in every Language, which is no less *Holy* for all that, than if they had delivered it in the same Tongue which *Adam* spoke, for that lies not in empty Sounds and Words, but in the Things and Thoughts. And 'tis perhaps out of Envy to them, that the *Rabbins* have expressly forbid Prayers to be said in any other Language but the Hebrew, may not excepting the Syrian. *Rabbi Jochanan's* Precept in *Talmud Schab*, Fol. 12. 2. as 'tis generally known, so 'tis deservedly laught at, *Whoever Prays to have his Necessities relieved in the Syrian Tongue, the Ministring Angels do not assist him, for the Ministring Angels do not understand Syriack*. 'Tis not worth the while to confute those People, who believe, as the *Rabbins* do, that this is the Language of the Angels, and will

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will be that of the Just after the Resurrection. Those that can so easily swallow such Stuff, deserve indeed the name of great *Opiniatres*, but are not, I believe, much affected with solid Reasoning.

VI. 'Tis now high time to come to something else, which no less disagrees from the Rabbinical Opinions than the former, but is of much greater use in the Interpretation of the Sacred Volume. 'Tis commonly boasted by these high-flyers, that the Hebrew Language is infinitely the finest in the World; in short, they are so liberal in their Commendations of the Hebrew Style, that they despise all other Tongues in comparison of that. We confess indeed there are some Beauties and Elegancies peculiar to the Hebrew Tongue, as there are to all the Tongues in the World, but at the same time believe it is not to be compared with others more refined and copious Languages. But before I proceed any farther, I am to inform the Reader, that it is consider'd by us, not such as perhaps it was in its flourishing Condition, but as we find it in the Holy Writings. I freely acknowledge that there were much more words, and a greater Variety of Phrases used, than we find in this small Volume; but as far as we can judge of it by its remainders, we have just reason to believe it to be a barren, ambiguous, unrefined Language, which now we shall endeavour to prove. The Excellency of every Language consists principally in three things, viz. Plenty of Words and

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and Phrases, Perspicuity of Speech, and Purty, the Rules for which are copiously laid down by those that have treated of Rhetorick. Now 'tis certain that several Languages, but especially the Greek, are much superior to Hebrew in all these Considerations, and 'tis a plain Case, that Hebrew can with no Pretence be said to be the finest Language in the World.

In the first place, Those that attentively read over the Holy Writings, or consult the Hebrew Lexicons, will be soon convinced that it has but very few Words, and very few Phrases. There are not only the same words, but (what argues a miserable Poverty) we meet with the very same Expressions every where, but especially in the Historical Books. The same Thread of Narration, the same Particularities of Style and Expression are visible all along: Nor is this only observable of the Writers of one Age, for all the Historians of all Times and Ages, have writ exactly after the same manner. I would demonstrate this Assertion more at large, were not most Men convinced of the Evidence and Truth of it: Therefore I will dwell no longer upon so plain a Chapter, I will only add, That the very *Rabbins*, who generally omitting the true Praises of their Country, still affect to Honour it with their Romances and Legends, are uncontrollable Witnesses of the Poverty of their own Language, since for the Interpretation of the Law, they are obliged to coin innumerable Words for the present Occasion, or else to

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fetch

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fetch them out of the Syro-Chaldaick and other Languages: And in these the Talmudical Books abound, and without them they could never be able to deliver or express their own meaning. Every one knows that there are at least ten times more words in *Buxtorf's Rabbinical Thesaurus*, than in his *Bible-Lexicon*. Nevertheless, with all their Foreign Assistance, this *Copie Rabbinica* falls infinitely short of the Grecian and Latin Treasures.

If we enquire into the Cause of the great Sterility of the Hebrew Language, we shall find it to be the same as has been observed of other Languages. Where Arts and Sciences lie under Contempt, and few Treatises are written, there must of necessity be a great want of words to express several things; for Men never impose Names on things or the Notions of the Mind, of which they never think, dispute, or write. For example, Before the Greeks diligently cultivated Philosophy, there were a thousand things of which Men never thought, and for expressing of which they had wanted fit words, if they had not coined new ones. The same thing befel the Romans, when they first began to treat of Philosophical Subjects in Latin. *I call those things Qualities*, says Cicero, *l. 1. c. 7. Acad. quest. which the Greeks call Ποσότητες, which very Term among the Greeks is not used by the Vulgar, but only by Philosophers; and several Instances there are of the like nature. The Logicians too have their particular hy-words which*

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the People do not understand, and this Method is common to all Arts: For either new words are to be coin'd, or else they are to be borrow'd from elsewhere; and if the Greeks follow this Conduct, who have for so many Ages exercised themselves in these Affairs, How much more Lawful is it for us to do it, who but now begin to treat of them? By this Instance, which may be back'd with several Arts unknown to the Hebrews, 'tis easie to perceive how great a Penury of words they must unavoidably labour under. As they were in a particular manner ignorant in Grammar, Rhetorick, and the whole Circle of Philosophy, as appears by their Writings, they must consequently be destitute of all those great Assistances that those Arts use to furnish. Poetry indeed, as far as the Genius of their Language would permit, was cultivated somewhat better by them; several things are majestically and beautifully said in their Songs, but yet so as to convince every impartial Reader, rather what they might have done, if they had used the same Application with other Nations, than what Perfection of Eloquence they had already acquired.

Secondly, Want of words begot Ambiguity, for when we are destitute of proper Terms to explain our meanings by, we must wrest them into another Sence, or else express particular things in words common to several more. For Metaphors, as Cicero well observes, l. 3. de Orat. c. 38. are like borrowing, where what a Man has not of his own, he supplies himself with others.

Now

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Now if one and the same word signifies several things, one in its proper Acceptation, the rest in a borrow'd or tralatitious Sence, 'tis no easie matter to distinguish its several Significations, and when Particulars are called by common Names, it often happens that we do not clearly understand, in what respect they differ from other things of the same Genus. For instance, *Erets* signifies among the Hebrews *Clay* that Vessels are made of, a *Tract of Ground* either more or less suitable to the present Occasion, the whole *Globe* of the Earth, and the *Men* that inhabit it; so that 'tis hard to say, which is its proper Signification, and which Figurative. When an universal Designation is fix'd upon this word, which is express'd by *chol*, *All*, 'tis doubred whether the whole Kingdom, or a less compass of Ground, or the *Globe* of the Earth, or whether all Men, or only some, are to be understood by it; so that nothing but the Context, or the Nature of the thing in debate, can assist our Conjectures. When figurative Words and Phrases cannot be so urged, as fully to express the things they describe, how far they may be urged without an Error, is often doubtful.

Now if we consider the various Significations of the indeclinable Particles, and how almost all the Tenses are confounded in the Verbs, and add to this their everlasting change of the Gender, Number and Person, of which subject abundance of Learned Men have written carefully, we shall have no great reason to boast of the Propriety

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of the Hebrew Tongue. Read but over *Chr. Noldius's* Concordance of the Particles, and *Glasfous's Grammatica Sacra*, two well approved and excellent Treatises; and when that is done, I believe the most obstinate Man will be convinced, that perhaps no Language in the World is fuller of Ambiguity and Obscurity than the Hebrew.

But yet I would not be so understood, as if a General Scheme of the Jewish Religion and History could not be had out of the Books of the Old Testament; for as that is not of it self obscure, the chief Matters relating to it are so frequently inculcated, that by virtue of those Repetitions, they are made plain enough. Besides we do not every where meet Ambiguities and Reasons to doubt, though 'tis certain there are but too many of them. Hence it is that nothing belonging to the Religion or History of the *Israelites* in general, has been called in question, though infinite Disputes have happened among the Learned, concerning some particular Circumstances, and other abstruser Matters, which are never to be decided by any Light of the Understanding, or any Application of Mind. Our Commentary all along abounds with such sort of Questions, wherein we cannot pretend to state Matter of Fact, but only deliver what we think our selves, and what others before us have conjectured; for there are infinite places so unaccountably perplext, that 'tis easie to demonstrate the Impossibility of finding out the genuine

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genuine Meaning of them, and every Person that has but a competent Knowledge of these Matters, will be soon sensible of this Truth, if he does but carefully consider it. For this reason those Persons that pretend to be influenced by the Truth, and not by a Party, will not easily condemn another for his Opinion, provided it does not hurt the Sum and Substance of the Book. But this is not a place to talk of these Matters.

In the Third place this sufficiently shews, that the Hebrew Language was never cultivated with any extraordinary care, for as the Culture of Ground has this end, to procure Plenty of wholesome Fruits for the Tiller, so are Languages for no other design cultivated, but that Men may have plenty of words to serve them upon all Occasions, and withal a Perspicuity of Oration, without which the greatest Plenty is useless. For certainly the end of Speaking, is not to amuse or tire our Hearers with multiplicity of words, but that we may be understood, and by the Mediation of Speech, to convey our Thoughts into the Minds of others.

Now the *Hebrews* not only neglected Grammar, and those other Arts and Disciplines that help to enrich a Language in words, but were utterly unacquainted with Rhetorick that serves to refine them. Upon this account they every where trample upon the Rules of the *Rhetors*, even those that do not depend upon the changeable Wills of Men, but are built upon the ever-

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lasting Rules of Reason, and ought to have the same Authority all the World over. No body doubts but that Clearness is one of the greatest Happineſſes any Tongue can boast of, ſince innumerable Miſtakes may ariſe from words not rightly underſtood, which are not only troubleſome in the common Offices of Life, but extremely dangerous in Matters of greater Conſequence. But the *Hebrews*, as we find, never took any great Pains to render their Language Perſpicuous.

If 'tis not, it ought at leaſt to be a Matter of Commendation among all People, neither to uſe fewer words than are neceſſary to make a Man underſtood, nor more than are requiſite, eſpecially in a ſimple Narration, that ſo our Hearers may fully comprehend our meaning. A Narration, ſays *Cicero*, who was not only an admirable Orator, but a great Maſter of Speaking, *lib 1. de Inv. cap. 20. ought to have three Qualifications, it ought to be Concise, Clear, and Probable.* We ſhall not meddle with the two laſt, as having already treated of Perſpicuity, and becauſe a Diſpute about Probability is impertinent here, but let us ſee what he ſays of Brevity. *'Twill be ſhort*, ſays he, *if we begin no higher than the preſent occaſion demands, and do not ramble into far-fetch'd Stories; and if we relate a thing in General, without mentioning every little Particular; for, generally ſpeaking, 'tis enough to ſay ſuch a thing was done, without deſcending into the Circumſtances, and if we proceed*

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no farther in the Story than things are worth knowing: And if we do not make Digressions into Foreign Matters: And if we so speak, that from what is already said, the Reader may sometimes guess at what is not said: And if we not only omit whatever is destructive of Perspicuity, but also whatever neither hinders nor helps it: And if every thing is only told once, and if we do not begin with that where we left off last. Though these Rules are agreeable to Reason, yet the Jews neglected them, as might be proved by a thousand Instances if there was occasion for it, which the attentive Reader will easily discover in our Annotations. Unless we carry this along with us, while we strive to accommodate the Hebrew Histories to the Precepts of Rhetorick, we spoil all, and do not understand what they mean. They are frequently defective in what is necessary, and abound in Superfluities; both which, unless they are supplied, or else are known to be redundant, 'tis impossible to understand them. An Emphasis is urged where there is none at all, and when any thing is omitted in a Narration, though 'tis by no means Rhetorical, that they'll tell you, against all Sense and Reason, ought not to be understood. Hence arise those angry Wars between the Interpreters, and bold Decrees pass concerning the Sence of some ambiguous places, which 'tis a mortal Sin to endeavour afterwards to revoke. Hence proceed Anger and Hatred, and all those Mischiefs which Theological Quarrels usually draw after them.

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There is another Rule likewise which is frequently neglected in the Narrations of the Hebrews, and yet is not undeservedly commended by the Skillful in Rhetorick. As we have already seen, they not only advise us to make the Narration as clear as we can, but also Methodical and Open, *That what is first transacted be first related, and the Series of Things and Times so preserved, that Matters be told exactly as they were done.* How Religiously the Hebrews have follow'd this Rule, let only the Book of *Genesis* declare for them, the good Order of which History will raise a thousand insuperable Difficulties, if we do not remember that the Jews were no Slaves to the Regularities of Time and Action. Thus what is said concerning the Dispersion of the Nations in the tenth Chapter, ought to be placed after the ninth Verse of the eleventh Chapter. The third, fourth, fifth and eighth Verses of the eleventh Chapter are likewise Inversions of the Narrations, as also the 23^d Verse of the 24th Chapter. See the Notes on Chap. 20. 2. Chap. 36. 6. Chap. 34. 1. and what we have remark'd in the Chronological Tables on this place.

If from these Observations that respect intire Sentences, and the due ordering of them, we pass to single Words and single Locutions, we shall find the Precepts of Rhetorick no less neglected there. But at present we will only content our selves to produce two or three Instances of words used in a Figurative Sence. And here,

as

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as the Rhetoricians tell us, *All Disparity is to be avoided*, because every Metaphor is, or ought to be, grounded upon some likeness. Upon which Score neither the Romans, nor the Grecians, instead of *to occasion a Dearth*, durst have said *to break the Staff of Bread*. Which Expression being not rightly understood, has made very Learned Men fall into strange Mistakes, as we shall shew in a proper place.

Because, as the Masters of Eloquence observe, *the chief Excellence of a word figuratively applied, consists in making a greater Impression upon the Sense; therefore all gross sordid Images are carefully to be avoided, that may nauseate the Hearer.* Therefore by this Rule it was not lawful to say, *That God was a War-like Man, That he was roused up like a Sleeper, and like a valiant Man, who after he has slept out his Wine, cries aloud.* And several other Expressions of the like nature.

I will instance in no more, for these are sufficient to convince the most prejudiced Reader, that the Hebrew Language is extreamly Rude and Impolite. But before I dismiss this Article, I must inform him of two things, and then take my Farewel of it. The First is, That we by no means pretend to deny, that the Hebrew Writings are here and there imbellish'd with extraordinary Sentences, and that there are many sublime Passages, but especially among the Prophets. But this is not enough to give a Language the Denomination of Polite, since no Tongue in the World can arrive to a sufficient

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Perfection of Purity, without a long and laborious Application to Grammar and Rhetorick for some Ages at least. A Book ought to observe from the beginning to the end of it, all or most of the Rules of Elocution and Order, to make it pass for an elegant and regular Composition. For as *Pliny* says, *l. 3. Ep. 13. Even the Barbarians now and then invent finely, and discourse magnificently, but none but learned Persons can dispose things fitly, and paint them with an agreeable Variety.*

The other is, That whatever has been hitherto said by us concerning the Hebrew Tongue, has only a relation to the Words and Stile, as the People commonly used them, but not to the things themselves that were revealed by God to the Jewish Prophet, and by them communicated to the World. No sound Christian ever denied that these things were always of the greatest Moment, and sometimes to be above the reach of Humane Understanding. But though God Almighty discover'd them to us by the Jews, yet he permitted them to use such a Stile as was most Familiar to themselves and their own Country-men: For the Spirit, by which they were influenced, by a wonderful Condescension, accommodated himself to the received Customs of their Language. Hence it comes to pass, that the Apostles deliver'd the Doctrine of Christ not in an Attick Stile, or with *Plato's* Eloquence, but after their own way suitable to the People, for though they were Divinely

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vinely inspir'd, yet they were but indifferently skill'd in Humane Learning, as we are told by *St. Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 1. and elsewhere. And herein the Divine Wisdom manifestly appears, that these Heavenly Truths should be reveal'd to, and, for several Ages, preserved by a Barbarous unlearned People, as the Greeks called them, and yet not the least tittle of them be known to those Nations that were in full Possession of all Arts and Sciences. That this was not done rashly, but pursuant to the Will of God Almighty, *St. Paul* teaches us, Ἰνα ἡ πίστις ἡμῶν μὴ ᾖ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει Θεοῦ. But this *en passant*, lest any Cenforious Reader should imagine, that we confound Divine and Humane things together; but to carry on this Argument as it deserves, would take up a greater space than the narrow limits of this Dissertation will allow.

VII. As long as the Jewish Government stood, and the People kept unmixt from other Nations, we may probably suppose they preserv'd the Strength and Purity of their Language; so that from *Moses* down to *Esdras*, it receiv'd no sensible Alterations. For while they were not debauch'd with the Manners of their Neighbours, consequently they made no change in their Writings; by which means their Language might have been extreamly alter'd, even whilst it was enrich'd and polish'd, which we know was the Fate of the Latin Tongue. And therefore 'tis not strange if we observe little or no difference of Stile in the Sacred Historians. But

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But after that the Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, as well as the other Ten, were carried into Captivity, and those that went not beyond the *Euphrates*, were scatter'd up and down the Neighbourhood, among Nations that spoke different Dialects of the *Canaanitish* Tongue: When the Jews, I say, after Seventy years, return'd into *Judea* at last out of several Countries, their Language could not avoid being vitiated with a mixture of other Dialects. *At that time*, says *Nehemiah* 13. 23. *I saw Jews, that took to them Wives from Asdod, Hammon and Moab, and their Children spoke one half (Hbatfi) in the Speech of Asdod, and knew not to speak pure Hebrew: And thus they spoke after the Tongues of several People: Nehemiah* indeed expressly tells us, he prohibited such Marriages, but 'twas not in his power to hinder the Jewish Language from being corrupted by that mixture: Nay, those that came from *Chaldea* no less introduced *Chaldaisms*. In following Ages, when infinite numbers of Jews not only lived in *Judea*, but in the neighbouring Nations, as *Syria*, *Egypt*, nay, and in remoter places, and yearly visited *Jerusalem* upon the Score of their Religion, it must of necessity follow, that not only those that lived out of *Judea*, but even the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, that daily convers'd with these Strangers, and married among them, must strangely adulterate their Language. So that at last, instead of the true genuine Hebraism, there sprung a *Syro-Chaldean* Mixture, as appears by the words

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words of that Language that are to be found in the New Testament, not to mention now the Dialect of the *Talmud*.

As other Writers have demonstrated these Matters more copiously, and a *detail* of Particulars is not our business here, I will only observe, that within some Ages after their return from the Captivity, the old Hebrew, as we find it in the Sacred Writings, was no longer the Mother-Tongue of the Jews, and therefore those that had a mind to be Masters of it, were obliged to study and peruse the Holy Volumes. Now though they had no more Hebrew Books than we have at present, yet in this matter they were much Happier than we, because the Tongue they spoke, had so great an Affinity with the ancient Hebrew, and therefore was no small help towards the attaining it. For this reason we find, that the Seventy Interpreters have (f) explained several obscure words out of *Chaldee*, or *Arabick*, rather than the Hebrew Books, where sometimes they are extant but once, or are read in a different Sence.

But now if we consider the lamentable Condition of the Jewish Republick, on every side

(f) I shall give two Instances of it. They have translated *Gen. 1. 6. Rakiah*, *cupula*, Firmament, and not *expansus*, as most of the later Interpreters have done; following the Signification of the word *Rakab*, which in Syriack denotes the same as *firmare*, *comprimere*. Thus also *Gen. 3. 15.* where we after the Hebrew have render'd it, *He shall bruise thy head*; the Sept. have translated it *αὐτὸς οὐ ὀφθαλμὸν καταβλεψήσῃ*, *He shall observe thy head*. E. Casaubon remarks, That this Root in the Arabick signifies *observare*, *speculari*: To which the LXX might have an Eye.

oppress'd,

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oppress'd, and over-run by the Kings of *Syria* and *Egypt* for many years, we shall find they had no opportunity to apply themselves to the Study of Grammar: And indeed some Learned Men, after a careful Examination of the Septuagint Version, which was publish'd in those times, have long ago concluded that they neither had any certain fixt Grammar, or Glossary, or Lexicon of the Hebrew Tongue: For they frequently violate all the Laws of Grammar, and in the translating of unusual words, the meaning of which is not to be gather'd from the Context, they are so strangely put to it, that it plainly appears they were not led by Grammar Rules, had no certain Knowledge of the true Signification of words, but guess'd and conjectur'd as well as they could, and so blunder'd right or wrong through all the difficult places. I am not ignorant that *Isaac Vossius*, and some other Persons, who never gave themselves the trouble, I suppose, to compare it with the Hebrew Original, endeavour to defend this Translation, and say 'tis in many places corrupted by the Negligence or Boldness of the Transcribers, where there's an evident Mistake in the Translating a Hebrew Word. But those that examine this Version diligently, will soon perceive the contrary; nor indeed is it credible, that it was every where almost corrupted in the obscure places, to omit a hundred other things that may be said against so precarious an Hypothesis.

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In those, and the following Ages, *A.D. 494
down to the time of the * *Masorites*,
though Jews seem wholly to have employed
themselves in the Study of Allegories and Rites,
but not of Philological Learning; which was
the reason that they look'd upon this Transla-
tion, which is far from being perfect, not only
as the most exact thing of that nature in the
whole World, but as Divinely Inspir'd. See the
History of *Aristeus*, *Philo* in his Book *de Vita
Mosis*, and *Josephus Jud. Ant.* l. 12. c. 2. No
surer an Argument can be given, how far the
old Hebrew was neglected in those times, than
their blind Admiration of these Interpreters, who
(to speak impartially) are rather to be pardon'd,
than commended for their Performance.

In the mean time we do not say this, as if we
thought that Translation to be of little use. On
the other hand, we always believed it to be ex-
treamly Serviceable, provided we help the Un-
accuracy and defect of Method in the Interpre-
ters with Grammar Rules, and the assistance of
correct Lexicons. As their Authority ought not
to over-weigh Grammar-Reasons, that are de-
duced from the immemorial Custom of any
Tongue; so where Grammar does not contra-
dict, and where the Sense allows, it ought to
be in great Esteem with us. The Opinions of that
Age, which arose perhaps from some ancient
Tradition, nay, even Conjectures that are sup-
ported by the use of the *Syro-Chaldaic* Lan-
guage, then in its flourishing Condition, are by
no

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no means to be dis-regarded by such as are well skill'd in the Sacred Philology.

But as in those things they are much superior to us, so we mightily exceed them in Method; for since we have most accurate Grammars, and follow fixt establish'd Rules, we no longer unriddle the Construction of a Sentence by guessing, nor are we carried up and down by uncertain Conjectures, as we may observe the Ancients were. We have likewise several Lexicons compiled, from all places of Scriptures compared together, by most Learned Men, and Concordances wherein are all the words in the Bible, and the places where they are to be found, most accurately set forth; by which Assistances we are now able more certainly to discover the various Signification of words, and with more Reason to defend them. Nor have we only very large Glossaries of the Hebrew Tongue, but likewise of the neighbouring Languages, as *Chaldee*, *Syriack* and *Arabick*, and out of these can we more conveniently compare these Tongues with one another, than those that lived in the days of the Seventy Interpreters.

Of what prodigious Advantage a certain Method, made up of immutable Rules, is, may for instance sake be soon known from the Latin and Greek Tongues. In *Cicero's* time the Greek Tongue flourish'd in *Greece* and *Asia*; he not only learnt it at *Rome*, but in *Greece* it self, and both writ and spoke Greek not amiss. Who would believe now, that in any of his Translations out
of

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of Greek, any Passages could drop from him that are liable to Censure? Yet for all this, some Learned Men have discovered several Mistakes in him, and the reason is, because he acquired the Greek Tongue rather by Custom than Rules; for which consult *H. Stephens's Lexicon Ciceronianum*. Nay what is more, do not we see that *Cicero* and *Varro*, the most Learned of the *Romans*, have committed such miserable Mistakes, even in the Derivations of the Latin Tongue, that we are ashamed of them? For though the Latin was their Mother-Tongue, and they daily took pains to learn Greek, yet they were altogether Ignorant of the Etymologick Art, and therefore committed unaccountable Errors. The case of the *LXX* Interpreters is the same, for being wholly Strangers to our Grammatical and Critical way of Interpretation, they often mistake, and unexpectedly fall into those Errors, which we may easily avoid.

VIII. If what I have advanced concerning Philological Learning being little minded by the Jews under the second Temple be true, as it evidently appears by what has been already said, and might be made out by many more Arguments, we may probably suspect that the Holy Volumes were not always transcribed with that Exactness and Care by the Copyists then, as they deserved. 'Tis certain the *LXX* Interpreters, whoever they were, which 'tis not our business now to enquire, seem to have made use of a very faulty Manuscript, and sometimes were not able to

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to guess the *ductus literarum*, as Learned Men have long ago observed. I own indeed, that all the various Lectons, which may be collected in their Translation, are not owing to a vitious Manuscript, and that several of them perhaps ought to be imputed to their Conjectures. As (h) *Gen. 2. 2. Chap. 8. 4, 7.* and in abundance of other places: But then that very liberty they assume to themselves of guessing, is a plain Demonstration that it was not generally believed at that time, that the Copies were free from Faults, since they were supposed to stand in need of Correction so often.

Besides we find that the Book which the *Massorites* made use of, and was of venerable Antiquity without question, has frequently

* Text. faults in the * *Cbetib*, which are a-
† Margn. mended in the † *Keri*, and which are often wanting in the *Samaritan* Copy.

As for instance the *Finalis*, which is to be found in the *Samaritan*, is often omitted in the word *Nabarab*, a *Girl*, which ought not to be left out; and *bi* is frequently read for *bou*, which (generally speaking) is amended in the *Samaritan* Book. 'Tis true, these and some others of the like nature, are but small inconsiderable Mistakes,

(b) In the second Chapter of *Genesis* v. 2. the Hebrew reads *It* On the seventh day God ended his Work; but the Septuagint, *On the sixth day*. And to *Gen. 8. 4.* the Hebrew is, *The Ark rested on the seventeenth day of the month*; but the LXX say, *The twenty seventh day of the month*; and below v. 7. in the Hebrew, *'tis the Raven went forth and returned*; but the LXX insert a Negation, *'tis as if it were, he did not return.*

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however they shew that Mistakes might creep in, and indeed did creep into the Text, and if they did it in a word so common and easie as *Nabarab*, certainly they would much sooner do so in an obscure, difficult, and rare word, especially where the Sence was abrupt, and the Series of the Oration did not help out the Transcribers, who did not understand it.

Nevertheless, because the Books of the Law were more frequently read than any of the rest, and are more easie to be understood, I must own there were but few Faults in them, and those of small Importance: And moreover that our Copy, I mean that of the *Masorites*, seems to be more Correct than the *Samaritan*, for which reason I have all along Faithfully set it down, not so much as changing a Letter. As I hinted above, some Faults are left by the *Masorites*, which might have been amended, but 'tis better, in my Opinion, that those very Faults should be left in the Copy, than that it should smell too much of a Critical hand, which I have often observed in the *Samaritan*, though it is not without its Faults, as Learned Men have long since taken notice.

After all, to deliver my own Sentiments, upon a serious Examination of the whole Matter, I am clearly of opinion that no Books of great Antiquity, have arrived to our hands so correct as are the Holy Writings of the *Hebrews*, although 'tis certain they are much the oldest of any; I mean those that were copied out by the Diligence of the *Masorites*, and so transmitted to

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Posterity. And that this did not happen without a particular Providence, which has hitherto so miraculously preserved the Sacred Histories, and the Revelations of the Prophets, for the common Benefit and Use of Mankind, no Man is better satisfied than my self, I have likewise frequently in this Book defended the common Readings against the Conjectures of Learned Men; as any one may see that will peruse my Annotations. At the same time I freely own, that the most indefatigable and judicious *Lud. Cappal*, has infinitely deserved of the Sacred Learning, by his *Critica Sacra*, and *Arcanum Paphnagationis*. To speak ingenuously, most of his Opinions do extremely please me, and I have set them down as if they had been so many Demonstrations. But since I was obliged to chuse one certain Edition to follow, and that the most accurate, I have only followed the Masoretick Copy in my Translation, as being the most correct of all, and yet I have not neglected to set down in my Commentary, all the various Lectiōs out of the *Samaritan*, and the Ancient Interpreters, that seem'd to be of any Moment. But I shall say more of this Matter in the following Dissertation.

gance of the *Magister*, and is transmitted to the *Discipuli* that were copied out by the *Discipuli*. It is certain they are much the oldest of any, and are the Holy Writings of the *Apostoli*, although they have arrived to our hands to convey as clearly of opinion that no Books of great Antiquity.

Dissertation II.

Of the best Manner of Interpreting the Bible.

*In The End of this Dissertation will be set forth
Interpret, and the Principal Heads of that
Method which we have followed. It is a
Difficult Matter, it is to Interpret the Holy
Writings. IV. What seems the best way to
attempt it. V. Hebrews, after what manner
they are to be translated. VI. The Difficulty
of turning the Hebrew Parables into English.
VII. What trouble there is in a Narration that
consists of Past, Present, or Future Tenses
together by the Conjunction Vay. VIII. The
Masoretic Copy to be followed as the most correct.
IX. What Assurances are to be had out of the
Old and Modern Interpreters. X. What helps
the neighbouring Language afford. XI. Of what
great use the comparing of several places of
Scripture is. XII. What helps may be safely bor-
rowed from Explanations. XIII. That the Errors
of some later Interpreters may be more easily
avoided than in the last Age.*

SINCE after the Labours of so many Learned
Men, who both in this, and especially the
last Age, have endeavoured to interpret the

Holy Scriptures, 'tis my Lot also to undertake the same Province; I think it but necessary to acquaint the Reader upon what Motives I attempted, and after what manner I have perform'd it: I am sensible that I have engaged not only in a very difficult, but a most invidious Affair, by reason of the different Parties and Factions that disturb the Repose of the Christian World. For in a Business of this nature, if a Man does not do something singular to distinguish him from the rest, he must expect to meet with the Contempt and Laughter of the Learned and Unlearned, and if he advances any thing unheard of, and untouch'd before, (which I dare presume to say is no easie matter) for his Recompense he's sure to incur the Hatred and Malice of the World, especially as 'tis manag'd by the Divines now a-days. Nevertheless after I had seriously revolv'd all this in my Mind, I was at last determin'd by the Authority of *Philo Judæus*, who after he has commended the Divine Volumes of *Moses* as they deserve, and shown what a Fatigue and Trouble his Interpreters must expect, ἔμειν, says he, διὰ τὸ τοῦ νοῦ καὶ τοῦ σώματος, &c. *Tet we must not therefore desist, but for the sake of Piety, strive to say something above our Power, and advance as far as 'tis lawful for Humane Minds to aspire, that are possess'd with the Love and desire of Wisdom.* In the beginning of his Book Περὶ νομομορφίας.

Having therefore with God's Assistance, as I hope, undertaken this difficult Affair, I have all along

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along endeavour'd neither to disgust the Nice Reader with any nauseous Repetitions, nor disoblige the Lovers of Antiquity with any new Doctrines. After what manner I have accomplish'd it, I design to lay open in this Dissertation as plainly as I can; but first of all I shall shew with what Difficulties I struggled, and by what means I was able to overcome them, and in this Age particularly better than could be done in the last; not that we pretend to a greater share of Judgment, but because we have much better helps now to enable us to surmount them.

II. Before we come to the Interpretation of the Holy Books, 'twill be necessary to remind the Reader as briefly as we can, what is meant by the word *Interpret*, for we do not here design to deliver all the Rules of that Art. Now since they that speak, make use of certain Words or Forms of Speaking, in order to be understood by others, and to raise the same Motions and Affections of the Mind in their Hearers as they feel themselves, those may be said to interpret other Mens words, (if we take the word in a large Acceptation) who so express them in another Tongue, that they who hear the Interpreter speak, think altogether the same things, in the very same order and manner, as the Person that spoke first would have them. If all Languages were equally Copious, and furnish'd with words of the same Force and Energy, we might safely then render Word for Word, and Phrase for Phrase, and consequently we should only have

occasion for a literal simple Translation. But since Languages do not answer one another so exactly, 'tis impossible to make a Verbal Translation if the Narration is somewhat long. Many things must of necessity be explain'd in fewer or more words, as the occasion demands, if the Interpreter has a mind to be understood, and to gain that Point in the Minds of his Hearers, as he whole Interpreter he is desir'd he should. Nay sometimes though we increas or diminish the number of words, yet the same Notion cannot be express'd in two Languages: by reason of the Diversity of the Idiom. An infinite number of Words and Expressions, whether Figurative or proper, are so peculiar to their own Tongues, that they can by no means be translated into another, without a long and troublesome Circumlocution, which cannot be infer'd into a Translation.

From hence 'tis easie to conclude, That no Translation can be in all Respects compleat, that is to say, such a Translation, that after the perusing of it, the Reader shall think the very same things, and be affected after the same manner, as if he understood the Language out of which the Version was made, and was able to draw for himself out of the Original Fountain. And as this holds certainly true in all Languages in the World, so 'tis most sensibly perceiv'd in the Latin Translations of the Hebrew Books, by reason of the vast Disagreement between the Hebrew and Latin Tongues, as we shall more fully

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fully demonstrate below. We know indeed that the ancient Jews and Christians, who were ignorant of the Hebrew Tongue, thought the Greek Version of the Old Testament, but especially that of the Pentateuch, commonly said to be done by the LXX Interpreters, to be the most absolute thing in its kind that ever was. *Ἐὰν τις χaldaïος ἢ Ἑλληνικῶν γλῶσσας, ἔλθῃ τῇ Ἑλλάδι, καὶ ἀντιδῇ τὴν ἑβραϊκὴν ἀντιδῇ τὴν ἑβραϊκὴν, &c.* Whether the Chaldeans learn the Greek Tongue, or the Greeks the Chaldean Tongue, and light upon both Scriptures, the Chaldean, and that into which it is translated, they admire and adore them as Sisters, or rather as one and the same both in words and things; not content to call them Interpreters, but Prophets, and Revelers of heavenly things, that happily expressed the genuine Thoughts of Moses with a most pure Spirit. These are Philo's words in his Book *de Vita Moysi*, which we could heartily wish were as true as they are remote from Truth. We should then have the best and surest Interpreters of Moses, and the exemplar of a perfect Translation, which they were very far from obliging the World with.

But since 'tis evident that, what Philo pretends was done by the LXX Interpreters, is impossible to be performed, by reason of the great difference of Languages, as it has been already observed, we did not therefore attempt to translate the Old Testament, because we hoped that those who were only well skill'd in Latin, might be able, after the reading of our Translation, to

reach the meaning of the Prophets, as well as those that understand Hebrew, and hear them speak in their own Native Tongue; we thought 'twas enough to aspire towards it, as far as the most different Idioms of the two Languages would give us leave; and since without taking too great a liberty, we could not bend the Hebrew Phrase to the Genius of the Latin Tongue, we often exprets'd the Hebraisms Word for Word, especially such as the Christian World has been long accusom'd to, or whenever we did not certainly understand the meaning of any place. Of which more hereafter.

But because the Hebrew Phrases, and manner of Expression, being different from all others, would give a great deal of Trouble to those that are only acquainted with Latin, we have added a plain Paraphrase more suited to the nature of that Tongue; by the reading of which, if they cannot attain to the very words of *Moses*, yet since we have in the same order exprets'd that in Latin, which *Moses* did in Hebrew, they will in some measure comprehend his Sense, and not as I imagine, deviate much from the true meaning of the Text. By this means what we were not able to compass by one single Version, perhaps we may perform by the help of the Paraphrase.

But after all, we thought we should not fully satisfy the Curiosity, if not of the most Learned, yet of those who were not altogether Strangers to Hebrew, if we did not in our Annotations explain the Hebraisms, Opinions, Customs, Rites,

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the Allusions to them, and the nature of places, as far as we could arrive to the Knowledge of them, and give an account of our whole Translation and Paraphrase. Thus in our Paraphrase we have in a few words shewn what our Opinion was; and in our Annotations more at large why we were of that Opinion: Nevertheless there is something in the Paraphrase, which is not always to be found in our Annotations; for in the former, the Reader will discover the Connexion and Series of the whole Oration, which for brevity sake we could not always attend in our Comments. Besides we have observ'd both by our own and the Experience of others, that especially in difficult Books, notwithstanding the Annotations of Learned Men upon every word, the Connexion was very often obscure, so that though all the words were well enough understood, yet the Force and Order of the reasoning did not appear. Therefore we thought our selves obliged to obviate this Inconvenience by making a continued Paraphrase, after the Example of several judicious* Authors. Which Conduct, if it does not seem altogether so necessary in Historical Writings, as some who have not duly consider'd the Matter may imagine; yet the great Usefulness of it will at least appear in the *Hagiographi* as they are call'd, and the Books of the Prophets. However I dare without Vanity affirm, that several, who after they have read the Translation, think they

under.

*As the Learned Publishers of the Books in *Hebrew* have generally done.

understand the Series of the Oration well enough will, If they cast their Eyes on our Paraphrase, even in the Historical Books, confess that they mis'd several things, which they fancied they understood very well. But I had rather the Reader should be convinced of this Truth, by the perusal of our Work, than by our own Boasting.

In our Annotations we have only endeavour'd to open and illustrate that which is called the *Grammatical*, and by the School-men the *Literal* Sense. We have there laid down no Theological or Theoretical, no Moral or Practical Conclusions, as well because it would have too much swell'd the bulk of the Work, as because after the Grammatical Sense is once fully understood, 'tis the easiest matter in the World to find out the Theoretical or Practical Doctrines, especially to those that have read any Systems of Divinity or Morality. We have also meddled with no Theological Controversies, because it was not our Intention to gratify this or that Party, but (what all good Christians ought to agree in) the lovers of the Holy Scriptures and of the Truth. As for those Persons that take a delight to know these Squabbles, which it were better for the Interest of Mankind that they were extinguish'd, they may have Books and Comments more than enough, written merely to gratify a Faction, and these they may turn over at their leisure.

Perhaps some People will reproach me, that I have not handled every thing more like a Divine,

but

but let them know, whoever they be, that I purposely left that Province, to be managed by their sublimer Wits. We might indeed be justly blamed, if we omitted any thing we promised to perform, but since it was never in our Thoughts, as we have solemnly affirm'd, to retail Theological Dogmas, it would be hard measure to condemn us for what we never promised. Nay, they have our leave to despise these our Performances in comparison of Theological and abstruser Contemplations. We'll not disown, if they please, that we did not penetrate into the obscure meaning of the Holy Writers, that lurks under the *Cortex Grammaticus*. Let us be thought to understand no more in the Sacred Books of the Hebrews, than the Authors were willing the People should understand, which *Antonius* in *Cicero*, speaking of the *Græcian* Learning, frankly owns of himself. If we have been able to attain but to this small Pittance every where, we shall mightily congratulate our selves, and others of vulgar Understanding, to whole Apprehension this was suited.

But as we had often occasion to doubt, whether our Conjectures were right, and could not make out the meaning clear enough by the help of Grammar and Criticism alone, or else several meanings of equal Probability offered themselves. The Reader may observe, that both in our Paraphrase and Commentary, we use a doubtful and no Dogmatical Style, and perhaps he will there discover frequenter Reasons for suspending

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his Opinion, than in most Writings of this nature. But since every Man Believes and Doubts for himself, I must inform those Learned Gentlemen that have a greater insight in these Matters, that I writ for my self, and such as stand upon the same level, and may they hug themselves with the sweet Contemplation, that they know more than their Neighbours. Least we should betray any one into Mistakes, we made a scruple to assert some things positively, when neither by the assistance of others, nor by our own Endeavours, we were able to fix any certain Judgment: However it does not follow, that People do not invent, because they do not affirm. As we vastly disagree from the Opinion of those Persons, who believe that nothing can be made out in Scripture, with the help of Grammar alone, unless Tradition comes in for a share; so we do not believe that it can explain and clear every thing: We are sure we have found it so. Now where the matter was not evident beyond all possibility of Dispute, we have taken care to restrain all rash Determinations, which would be an unpardonable Imposition on the World, if we should affirm things false, or things unknown; besides that, nothing can be more Scandalous, than to let our Approbation run before our Knowledge.

III. So much we thought our selves oblig'd to say, concerning our Manner of Interpreting in general, now we shall proceed to lay before our Reader the Difficulties that gave us no little Pain,

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Pain, when we first began to set Pen to Paper. If we rendred word for word, it was apparent that the Version would become unserviceable to those that were unacquainted with Hebrew, for whose use it was principally intended: For it had been utterly impossible for them to understand it, unless they perpetually consulted the Comments, where nevertheless many Grammatical Criticisms of small importance are omitted: And frequently too, those that are unskillful in Hebraisms, would have wrested them in a wrong Sence. And now, if to avoid these Inconveniencies, we had follow'd a different Conduct, allowing our selves too great a Latitude; it was to be fear'd, lest in obscure places we might impose our own Conjectures upon the Reader, instead of the meaning of the Sacred Writers. I know 'twill be replied to all this, That a middle way is then to be observ'd, whereby the Translation shall neither be made so servile and close as to become obscure, and mis-lead those that are only skill'd in Latin, nor too lax or redundant, so as to shew the Interpreter rather than the Writer himself. But so severe an Undertaking is much harder to be well perform'd, than 'tis easie to talk of it, as we shall shew by a few Examples.

'Tis a frequent Hebraism, *And he lift up his Eyes and saw: Et sustulit oculos, & vidit.* See Gen. 13.10. & 18.2. & 22.4, 13. & 24.62. & 31.10, 12. & 37.25. & 39.7. & 43.28. This Phrase with the Hebrews, as it appears by the above-mentioned places,

places, signifies to look round about one, to see things at hand, and remote, and the like. We frequently meet with it in the other Books of the Old Testament in the same Sence; so that there is no room left to doubt of its Signification. Now the *Latins* have the same Phrase, but then 'tis in a different meaning. Those that are afraid and ashamed, we use to say, dare not *oculos attollere*; and on the other hand, those People, *tollunt oculos*, that are possess'd with no Apprehensions, as it were easie to prove by several Instances. Therefore this Hebraism we saw, was not to be verbally translated.

There is a like Expression, Chap. 29. 1. *Et sustulit Jacobus pedes. And Jacob lift up his feet, and went into the Eastern Country.* Now who could make any thing of *tollere pedes*? The *Latins* indeed say, *Efferre, inferre, ferre pedem*, but in another Sense.

The Reader must be forc'd to own, that these Hebraisms were so to be rendred in the Translation, as to have Latin Phrases substituted in their room. But there are other Hebraisms too, no less frequent, that afford us a juster occasion of doubting. The *Hebrews* often use to subjoyn an Infinitive to any other Mood or Tense of the same Verb, as *dying thou shalt die, seeing I saw*; and innumerable others that occur in all the *Hebrew Writers*. If you translate it *verbatim* into *Latin*, a Reader that only understands that Language, will ask you what's the meaning of that Phrase, or whether 'tis a peculiar

peculiar Emphasis of the Hebrew Tongue or note. If you neglect the Hebraism, and omit the Infinitive, those that have taken some pains about that Language, will complain that here's a notable Emphasis lost. Therefore let a Man manage himself as carefully as he can, yet he will lie under a necessity of displeasing one or other. I know indeed that some of the later Interpreters, instead of the Infinitive, which the Latin will not bear, use some Adverb or other, to express the Emphasis which they imagine to lie conceal'd under this Phrase, as Gen. 2. 17. Instead of *moriendo morieris*, they have *utique morieris*; and Exod. 3. 7. where we find *videndo vidi*, they turn it *probe vidi*. But though we should grant there is some mighty force in this Hebrew Phrase, if it can at any time be express'd, as in the latter Example, I would desire to know what is the meaning of *utique morieris*? Sometimes too they use the trusty Adverb *omnino*, as Exod. 21. 20. *Omnino vindicator*, 22. *Omnino mulctari*, 28. *Omnino lapidator*, &c. Which Phrases after all are not perspicuous to Latin Ears. Now for our part, we thought it much better to leave the Infinitive wholly out, either because it cannot be express'd in Latin; or because 'tis not Emphatical. But only an usual form in the Hebrew Law, like which there are abundance in the Roman Law that are altogether redundant.

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Consult the above-cited Chapter of *Exodus*; and our (a) Annotations on *Genesis* 2. 17.

Sometimes we meet with words that have none of the same Efficacy in other Languages to match them, such as *Tboledoth*, *Generation*; for amongst the Latins, *Generatio* scarce signifies any thing else but the Action of getting, or the manner how Animals are generated; and sometimes perhaps the same as *Ætas*, or *juvæ*: But with the Jews it does not only signify this, but denotes Original, Ancestors, and Posterity. If you are minded to gratifie a Latin Reader, and tell him what *Generation* signifies amongst the Hebrews, you must use a long-winded Periphrasis, which a simple Translation will never indure.

We frequently meet with the word *Phakad* in the Holy Scriptures, which uses to be translated *visitare*, to *visit*, and yet that is not the

(a) *Thou shalt surely die*, as we render it; but in the Original 'tis, *dying thou shalt die*. Upon this place our Author observes, that the Hebrews frequently joyn a Verb with the Infinitive or with a Verbal, but especially in their Laws, rather to conform with the Custom of their Language, than to denote any Emphasis. *Abimelech* threatens, *Gen.* 26. 11. that whoever touches *Isaac* or his Wife, *shall die the death*. So likewise among the *Greeks*, but chiefly the *Atticks*, we see that Nouns of the same Signification are frequently joyn'd to Verbs, as *ἀποκτείνω θάνατον*, *θάνατον δίδωμι*. And sometimes among the *Latins* we meet with *vitam vivere*, and several Expressions of the like nature, where no Grammarian ever dreamt that a particular stress is to be laid upon the words, but continues our Author, *In sacris hæc verba acutius, quam opus est, sumus.*

meaning

meaning of it as we have (b) observed upon *Genesis* 21. 1. The Greeks turn it *οὐκ ὀνομαζέτω, οὐκ ὀνομασθήτω, οὐκ ὀνομασθήσεται, μη μνησθῆναι, ἀναμνησθῆναι, ἀναμνησθήσεται, ἐπισημαίνω, ἐπισημαίνω, ἐπισημαίνω, &c.* Nor does this word signifie different things in respect of the various Conjugations, but even in the Conjugation *Kal*, it sometimes signifies a Kindness, and sometimes a Punishment: A Kindness in the above-mention'd place of *Genesis*, and a Punishment in *Exod.* 20. 5. Nor does any other Language, as I know of, afford us a word, resembling this in signification, which may be taken both ways: But still it is to be translated, and 'tis incredible what trouble these and such other words give the Interpreter. We have translated it *Gen.* 21. 1. *Curam gerere*, not that it pleased us, but because we could think of nothing better. If we had turned it, *The Lord, as he said, visited Sarah.* *Jehovah, quemadmodum dixerat, Saram visitavit*, a Latin Reader would have understood nothing else by it, but that an Angel visited *Sarah* in the name of God, as the year before *Moses* tells us three Angels had done the like, *Chap.* 18.

(b) The Hebrew word properly signifies *curam gerere*, to take care of, and is taken in a two-fold Sense, for sometimes it signifies the care of a Friend, and sometimes that of a Revenger. He that turned the Septuagint Version into Latin before St. *Jerom's* time, has translated several places of it barbarously and unskillfully, which St. *Jerom*, by reason it was received in the Latin Churches, did not think fit to change. Hence it comes to pass, that abundance of barbarous, or at least improper words, have crept into our Lexicons and Modern Versions.

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Since these, and innumerable Idioms of the like nature, are every where to be found in the Sacred Volumes, an Interpreter must take extraordinary Pains to discharge his Duty Faithfully and Modestly, unless he would have his Fidelity call'd in question, and his Boldness censur'd. We own indeed, 'tis not so great a Fatigue to translate now, after so many great Men whose Translations we have, as the first Interpreters to their Cost found it. 'Tis undoubtedly true, that both the Ancient and Modern Translations are mighty helps to us: Far be it from us who have found by Experience, how great a Task they sustained, to detract from the Praises of these deserving Men, or to deny the great Service they have done the World, by their endeavours to illustrate the Scriptures. Nay, we are sensible, that if they had not carried the Torch before us, we had not been able to reach so far, as even those that have perform'd the worst in this kind have done. But if we may be allowed to speak the truth freely, the better part of the Ancients either slavishly follow'd the Track, or else digressed too far from it; and translated the Hebrews either with too servile a Superstition, or too bold a Freedom; nor was it a much less trouble to chuse the best out of their several Versions, than to see whether we could not find out a better of our own. Generally speaking, It was much easier to find what to censure, than what to follow. To prevent being impos'd upon by the Authority of others, every thing was to be carefully weigh'd

weigh'd after the same manner, as if we had been the first that undertook such a Work; otherwise we had relied on the Credit of other People, and neither satisfied the World nor our selves. Now what expence of Time and Pains it requires to perform all this, only those are able to judge, who have attempted something of the like nature, for others can never imagine it.

IV. Nevertheless, so many Hardships and Difficulties were to be overcome, to attain to a perfect Translation, such as we had conceived an Idea of in our Mind; but if we could not reach that heighth, we must be content to come as near it as possibly we could. Therefore we proposed to our selves constantly to follow a middle way, that is, neither to render those places that were obvious enough in the Original, obscure with the Hebraisms, nor our of too nice an Affection of writing Latin, to indulge our selves in too bold a Version.

But this, you'll say, a thousand People have threatned to do, many years before you were born, and yet we do not rest satisfied with their Performances; Do you think then that you shall be able to answer our Expectations? No, I am not so blinded with Self-love as to imagine any such thing; but since the Condition of Humane Affairs is such, that nothing is perfect in all Respects, and nothing pleases all alike, 'tis sufficient if I do not incur the Displeasure of all, and if my Attempt does not lag behind the Endeavours of others.

Cicero formerly translated the noblest Oration, of two of the most Eloquent Men that *Athens* ever bred, *Æschines* and *Demosthenes*, one against another; neither did he literally translate them like an Interpreter, as he tells us himself, for the Translations are not extant, but like an Orator, giving them all the Spirit, and Life, and beautiful turns of the Latin Tongue. As this was impracticable in a literal Version, he had a greater Respect to the Sence than the Expressions; for he did not think himself obliged to tell over all his Authors words to the Reader, but to give him them in weight. Now since this was not to be done in too strict a Translation of the Holy Books, we endeavoured to reach it in a looser Paraphrase, that so those Persons that are not delighted with the Barbarousness of a Translation, or do not understand Hebraisms, may have somewhat to read and understand. But perhaps we have departed farther from our Original than *Cicero* did from his, because the Hebrew Language differs more from the Latin, than the *Athenian* way of Writing did from the *Roman*.

'Tis true, in our Version we have followed the Hebrew closer than the Purity of the Latin will allow us; but since it could not be avoided, we hope we shall make our Reader someamends by our Paraphrase. Therefore though 'tis the confess'd Genius of the Latin Tongue, to love Perspicuity more than the Hebrew does; nay on the contrary, endeavours to avoid all

Obscurity

Obscurity as much as it can; we acknowledge our Translation to be somewhat Obscure, but as we are used to commend Pictures not for shewing us a handsom Face, but for representing Nature to the Life, so a Translation, where the Language of the Original is clear, ought to be clear, and where it is obscure, ought to be obscure. Now we mean here by *obscure*, not those things that are obscure to the ignorant in Hebrew, for then most of the Scripture Expressions would be obscure; but those that are not sufficiently understood, even by such as are tolerably vers'd in that Language. On the other hand, by the word *clear*, we do not only mean those things which are obvious to all Understandings, not excluding those of the duller sort, but which give no manner of Difficulty to the Skillful in that Language, or may be so expounded, as to leave no Doubt at all in the Minds of the Learned.

V. Now that we might be able to observe this Method through the whole Work, we laid it down for an unalterable Law in translating the Hebraisms, which so often occur: 1. That all the clear Hebraisms, which would bear a Translation, should be translated. 2. If any of them could not well be rendred into Latin, yet if our Ears were accustom'd to them, they should be literally translated. 3. That all obscure Hebraisms should be retained. Which it will not be amiss to illustrate by a few Examples.

Nothing is more common in Scripture, than Speeches and Dialogisms that are usher'd in by

the Verb *Vaijomer*, & *dixit*, or the Gerund *Lamar*, *dicendo*: Now 'tis evident that the former may be fully and pertinently express'd by the Latin word *inquit*, the latter by *hu verbu*, and yet the Interpreters have generally forborn to use them; as if this, forsooth, had been too great a Liberty to take. Now this runs through all the Bible, so that you may find an infinite number of Sentences with these words, & *dixit*, and *be said*. So in *Genesis* 3. 1. *And he said to the Woman, yea batb*, &c. 2. *And the Woman said unto the Serpent, we may eat*, &c. 4. *And the Serpent said unto the Woman*, &c. 9. *And he said unto him, where art thou?* 10. *And he said, I heard thy Voice*, &c. 11. *And he said, who told thee?* &c. 12. *And the Man said, the Woman*, &c. 13. *And the Lord God said unto the Woman*, &c. 14. *And the Lord God said unto the Serpent*, &c. 16. *To the Woman he said*, &c. 17. *And unto Adam he said*. But why we should servilely be confin'd to the order of the Hebrew words, as if there was something extraordinary in them, we saw no reason; and the comparing of our Version with the rest will shew, which of us has express'd himself most agreeably to the Genius of the Latin Tongue. So Chap. 8. 15. *And God spake unto Noah, saying, Es loquutus est Jehova ad Noach, dicendo, or dicens*, is indeed exactly conformable to the Hebrew words, but does not express the meaning, any better than *Alloquutus est Noachum Deus, hu verbi*. 'Tis certain that many of the Interpreters, by their obscure Diligence, have made their

their Translations so insupportable, that they are not to be read without Contempt. But let not the Reader imagine, that this is occasion'd by the over great care they took to render even the least Particles of Scripture as far as 'twas possible; for if this Scruple had possess'd them, they had never translated the obscure places with so much boldness, as if it were not an invidious labour, we could easily shew.

'Tis a common Hebraism to call ones name, *vocare nomen alienius*, instead of *nomen imponere*, To give one the name of. As in Chap. 5. 29. (and 'tis often in the Book of Genesis alone) *And she called his name Noah*, *Et vocavit nomen ejus Noach*, that is, *Ei Noacho nomen indidit*, *Noachum eum nomine appellavit*. There's not the least reason in the World to doubt but 'tis so, and yet after the vulgar Interpreter's Example, several since have translated it *Vocavit nomen ejus Noab*, which is obscure and barbarous, when the Hebrew Phrase is plain enough.

We frequently meet in the beginning of a Narration, *Et fuit*, *And it came to pass*, in the Hebrew. As Chap. 6. 1. *Et fuit, cum cepit homo multiplicari*, *And it came to pass, when Men began to multiply*, &c. which is the same in effect with ours, *Cum in terris augeri cepissent*, as also the vulgar has translated it. But the Tigurine Version, and others have it barbarously, *Et factum est, cum cepissent homines multiplicari*.

Several Interpreters have not only Superstitiously every where translated word for word,

but have preserv'd the very Situation of the Hebrew words, and the Construction as far as they could conveniently, nay and farther too, but in this matter, we must own that we had a greater regard to the Latin than the Hebrew. We saw that a world of Hebraisms had in spite of us crept into our Translation; nor was it necessary, since 'twas of no advantage to the Reader, to place the Latin words after the Hebrew manner, where it was plain, that though the Order was inverted, yet the Sense was not. *Arias Montanus* who published the *Interlineary Translation*, as they call it, was obliged to preserve the Order, and as far as he was able, even the very number of the words: But those that publish'd their Version apart from the Original, were not obliged in my opinion to be at so great an Expence to write barbarously. I will produce one instance to explain my meaning, The *Tigurines*, whose Translation is otherwise not to be despised, have thus rendred the 15, 16, 17 Verses of Gen. 8. *Loquutus est autem Deus ad Noah, dicens, Egrederere ex arcâ, tu & uxor tua, filii tui, & uxores filiorum tuorum tecum. Cuncta animantia quæ tecum sunt, ex omni carne, tam in volatili, quàm in jumento, tum etiam omni reptili quod reptat, educ tecum, & repant in terrâ, fructum edant, atque augeſcant.* But we have done it thus, *Tum allocutus est Noachum Deus, his verbis, Egrederere ex arcâ tu, unâque tecum uxor tua, filii tui, atque eorum conjuges. Omnem etiam bestiam, quæ tecum est, ex omni carne, inter volucres, inter pecudes,*

*pecudes, atque inter omnia reptilia quæ in terris
repunt, unâ educito, reptentque in terrâ, & in eâ
crescant, ac multiplicentur.* There is nothing in
the Hebrew words, which ours do not compre-
hend; nor has the Superstitious Nicety of the
Tigurines, unless I am mistaken, perform'd more.
But we do not cite this, or any other places, be-
cause they have something remarkable in them,
but because we happened to meet with them
first. To conclude, All the Translations of the
Old Testament we ever saw, are liable to the
same Fault, excepting that of *Seb. Castellio*,
which is somewhat too bold.

'Tis by no means our Intention to blame those
Persons, who in their Translations of the Bible,
have thought fit to despise all the Rules of Rhe-
torick, as to their Periods; for since the *He-
brews* have shorter turns of their Sentences, and
are not subject to the same Laws as the *Greeks*
and *Latins* are, there would be a wretched Con-
fusion indeed, if their Stile were to be suited to
the Precepts of Rhetorick, which yet *Castellio*
does too often. However I see no cause why
we that speak Latin, should so Scrupulously ad-
here to the Hebrew order.

There are other Hebraisms, as we observ'd
before, the Signification of which is no less
known, and yet we are scarce able to translate
them into Latin, without a long Circumlocu-
tion; but since our Ears are already accusom'd
to some of them, we use them as the *Latins* for-
merly did several Greek words which their
Language

Language wanted; and besides they have been long ago naturalized, and made Free of the Church by the Latin Fathers. Some few Examples of them we'll lay before the Reader, as we did of the former.

Thus *Genesis* Chap. 5. 22, 24. and Chap. 6. 9. *Moses* has used *incedere cum Deo*; to walk with God, instead of that which in Latin we say, *Sanctè ac piè vivere*. However the Metaphor could not be changed, without assuming too great a Liberty, for who can endure *Castellio's* translating it, *Ad dei voluntatem vitam agere, ex dei voluntate sese gerere?*

Chap. 6. 9. *Noah* is said to be *Vir justus ac integer in generationibus suis*: A Just Man, and perfect in his Generations. And Chap. 7. 1. 'tis in *eà generatione*; in that Generation, viz. that which was destroy'd in the Deluge. Every Body sees 'tis all the same thing as if *Moses* had said, that *Noah* was the only righteous Person among the Men of that Age; *Castellio* has translated it *Sæculum* and *Ætas*, the latter of which is tolerable, but the former cannot be endured. For what Man that has made but a small progress in Hebrew, reading this Translation, would not believe that the *Hebrews* had a word which exactly answered *Sæculum*, when indeed they have not.

Of the same nature is Chap. 6. 8. *Gratiam invenire*, to find Favour: Which Phrase has several Significations, and the Latin Tongue affords us no one single Expression that comes up to the full

full extent of it. Sometimes where the Sence would bear it, we have translated it, *Si qua mihi est apud te gratia*, for *Si inveni gratiam in oculis tuis*, as Chap. 18. 3. but this was not to be done always. *Castellio*, Chap. 6. 8. instead of that which *Moses* expresses by *Noachus apud deum gratiam invenit*, inverts the Phrase, and turns it, *Noe fuit propitius*. Chap. 18. 3. *Si vis mihi gratissimum facere*. Chap. 19. 19. *Tanto me obstringis beneficio*: In all which he has not once hit the force of the Hebraism, though he takes so large a Scope.

We find in the same Chapter v. 19. a common Hebraism, by which *omne animal* is call'd *omnis caro*, and for which *Castellio* uses *omnia corpora*; but besides that, 'tis too remote from the Hebrew word, *Caro* is so often taken in that Sence, both in the Scripture, and the Ecclesiastical Writers, that 'tis much better to retain it, than interpret it by another.

Thus in the first Verse of Chap. 11. we read, *Cum universa terra labii unius eorundemque verborum esset*: The Phrases are Hebrew, but we durst not change them in the Latin, both because we could not light upon Expressions proper to match them, as also because Learned Men are not agreed about their meaning, as we have * observ'd about that place.

* See Dissertation VI.

Castellio has it thus, *Cum autem universus terrarum orbis eodem sermone atque oratione uteretur*.

The

The same Reason, supported by the Frequency of the Phrase, prevail'd with us to retain the Hebraism *Anima mea*, my Soul, instead of *ego*. Say, I pray thee, says Abraham to his Wife, Chap. 12. 13. thou art my Sister, that it may be well with me for thy sake, and my Soul shall live because of thee. *Castellio* translates it, *Ut tua causa atque opera mea utilitati, salutique consulatur*. The same Expression is to be found often in *Homer*, which all the Interpreters have literally translated.

Many more Hebraisms, we must confess, are to be found in our Translation, which because they were either obscure, or of a doubtful Signification, we translated literally, lest we should obtrude our own private Conjecture upon the Reader, for the true meaning of the Sacred Writers. Sometimes too we have retain'd even the words, when we saw the Learned disputed about the Signification of them with doubtful Success; but a few Examples will sooner shew whether we did well in this, than a long Harangue.

Therefore Chap. 6. 14. we turn'd *Arcam facies nidis instructam*, rather than *mansueticam* after *St. Jerom* or *Cellis*, because, though several rooms seem to be understood, in which the Creatures were lodged separately, yet for all we know *Moses* may mean a Floor, or something else that is called *Kinnim*. *Castellio* borrows the word *Loculata* out of *Varro*, who calls a Fish-pond so, where the Fish are kept in several Chests, which suits not ill with this place, though we durst not follow him.

What

What seems to be the meaning of *Servus Servorum*, Gen. 9. 25. we have shewn in our (c) Annotations upon that place. It may be a Hebraism like *Sanctum Sanctorum*, *Canticum Canticorum*, to denote the vilest sort of Slave, and it may without a Hebraism too be said *Servus Servorum*. Nay, *Castellio* has not altered these words, which is somewhat strange, considering how much he indulges himself all along in his beloved Periphrases.

We have (d) shewn, Chap. 12. 3. what is the meaning of *in aliquo bene dicere*, and our Exposition seems to be well grounded, because 'tis

(c) As in a numerous Family there are several sorts of Servants, so some of them are in a more honourable Post than others, and command those below them, who may therefore be said to be Servants of Servants. But since this is the earliest mention we find of *Servitude*, It may not be amiss to examine the Rise of it. So long as Men were but few in number, and mindful of their common original lived together; there seems to have been no such thing as a Slave or Servant in the World; for the two causes of Servitude, Poverty and Force, were wanting. But upon the Dispersion of Mankind into abundance of Colonies, several that were not able to maintain themselves without a dependance upon others, parted with their Liberty merely to be sustained. After the Trade of War became fashionable, many that were taken Prisoners by the Enemy, and had their Lives spared, were by Force reduced to the State of Slaves, partly that they might not be in a Capacity to hurt them for the future, and partly that they might not be kept Gratis; and the *Vernae*, that is, the Sons of these, were, by the Misfortune of their Birth, subjected to the same Condition.

(d) *In this all Nations of the Earth shall be blessed.* The meaning of which place, according to our Author, is this. Whenever thy Name or Example is cited, most of the Eastern Nations shall use the following Form of Benediction, *May God bless thee as he blessed Abraham.* Thus Gen. 48. 20. *In this shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh.*

agree-

agreeable to the Genius of the Hebrew Language. But least those that interpret these words after a different manner, should complain that they were robb'd of a Text; as also because otherwise we must have made use of too long a Periphrasis, we have translated it word for word. *Castellio* has here translated as they would have it, *In te omnes beabuntur orbis regiones.*

Chap. 6. 4. we find this passage in *Moses*, *There were Nephilim* (we render it Giants) *in those days*; where the word (*e*) *Nephilim* seems to import Robbers; but because it does not fully appear whether such sort of People are meant in that place, we thought it advisable to retain the Hebrew word. They that after the Septuagint and vulgar Translation have translated it *Giants*, have indeed own'd themselves to be of their Opinion, but have brought no Arguments to prove it: And indeed, neither from the Story it self, nor from the Signification of the word, are they able to bring one proof that *Giants* are meant here. On the other hand, both the Story which relates them to be *Viros Fortes*, and the word it self favour our Interpretation, yet for all that we durst not insert it amongst *Moses's* words.

For the same reason we have not changed the word *Sibiloh*, Chap. 49. 10. because its Signification

(*e*) The Radix *Naphal*, from whence this word is undoubtedly derived, not only signifies *to fall*, but *to rush on* after the manner of Robbers; for which reason *Aquila* translated it *Violentum*, and *Symmachus* *Crimis*.

is unknown. Our *Annotations upon that place have made it appear, that no one knows what is the true meaning of it. However were we to chuse our Opinion, we should incline to follow the Translation of the *Septuagint*, because it is less Obnoxious to the Calumny of the Jews, and cannot be pretended to carry the least Partiality in Favour of the Christian System. Therefore in our Paraphrase we have taken the same course with the *LXX*, but in the Version rather chose to make use of the Hebrew word.

* See Dissertation XII.

VI. But a much greater Difficulty we found it, to translate the Conjunctions and Prepositions, by reason of the different meaning which each of them has in the Holy Scriptures. For whereas the Latin Conjunctions and Prepositions have not so large a Signification, the Ambiguity of them is so far restrain'd by the structure of the Sentence, that they can only be taken in one Sense; but among the Hebrews, who take but little notice of their Situation, one small Particle has all the Significations of the Latin ones. So that if we should sometimes use a Latin Conjunction or Preposition, which generally answers that in the Hebrew, our Translation would appear very uncouth to a Latin Ear; but if we use another, we fix a determin'd Sense of our own, upon that which seems to be doubtful in the Hebrew. Let us do what we can, we shall find it a difficult matter to avoid these Inconveniences; nay I dare say, no Interpreter was ever yet able to do it.

For

For instance, *Vau* supplies the place of all the Conjunctions, and if we may believe *Chr. Noldius*, has seventy three Significations, the chief of which is Copulative, like that of the Latin Conjunction *Et*. Nevertheless if it were always translated like *Et*, it would not only be the most disagreeable thing in the World to one that understands Latin, but nothing would be more obscure and perplex'd, since with the *Latins* 'tis not all one whether you say *Et*, or whether you say *Atque*, *Aut*, *Tamen*, *Certe*, &c. Now if it so happens that the place is doubtful, and the Conjunction *Et* cannot possibly be used, because it would spoil the Sence in Latin, a Man must of necessity make use of another, and so determine the meaning of that place, which before was doubtful.

Now in this, as well as several other Matters, we find 'tis impossible to make a Translation of the Scripture, without a Man's interposing his own Sence against his Will: Though it were to be wish'd that the Sacred Volumes could be so translated, that our own Conjectures might not be read, instead of the Divinely Inspir'd Author's meaning, whether obscure or clear. But this is impracticable for the above-mention'd Reasons; and therefore after we have done all that we can, to explain the Sence of the Scripture as plainly as 'tis possible, the World must either acquiesce in our Endeavours, or every one must study Hebrew in his own defence, and take the best Method he can to satisfy himself.

We

We have taken that care all along in our Translation, as very seldom to interpose our own Judgment, where the place was somewhat doubtful; but it was impossible to use this Caution every where. However we have faithfully set down in our Annotations, what Conjunction or Preposition was read in the Hebrew word. (f) Consult our Notes upon *Genesis* 6. 8. Chap. 8. 12. We have also observed, that sometimes the true Signification of the Particles is wrested, where the Translator did not clearly understand why the Sacred Writers have used them in certain places. See our Comment upon (g) *Gen.* 1. 20. some have made no difficulty to use Latin Particles, not such as exactly answer the Hebrew, but such as they would have used, if they had been obliged to express the same things in Latin after their own manner; which Conduct may throw both Translators and Readers into very shameful Mistakes. But we, in the Translation of the Hebrew Particles, have never receded from the most commonly received Signification of them, unless we were absolutely forced to do it, although sometimes it was none of the most proper. For we are well satisfied, that all Nations in the World do not connect their Sentences

(f) In the Hebrew 'tis and Noah, and he said, but M. le Clerc has translated it *Noachus tamen, Expellavit tamen*. But with our Author's leave, *hec videntur esse imperitiae notata*.

(g) Where agreeably to the Hebrew our Author has translated it *supra Firmamentum*, St. Jerom, *sub Firmamento*, the LXX *ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ*, or *juxta Firmamentum*; the English, in the *Firmament*. But his Reasons are too long to be set down.

tences after the same manner, and that we are not to introduce them using the same Thread of Narration, if we design faithfully to Copy their different ways of Speaking. If this had been duly considered by that Learned Author, who has obliged the World with a laborious and useful Book, called, *The Concordance of the Particles*, he had mightily lessened the Significations which he attributes to them, for very often he minds nothing else, but how to substitute an agreeable, or a more emphatical Latin Particle in the place of the Hebrew.

The same ingenious Person has observed, that these Particles are sometimes redundant, and sometimes deficient, which he has evinced by several unquestionable Examples, though some of them 'tis true may be call'd into question. For as there are some places where 'tis apparent that they either abound or ought to be supplied, so there are others where they give us no small difficulty, which 'tis not in the power of every little Pretender to remove. For instance, if in *Gen. 19. 26.* where we have render'd it, *And she became a Pillar of Salt*, we suppose the two Particles ׀ and ׀ to be wanting, as they commonly are; then the Sense of that passage will be, *And she became like a Statue in a saltish Soil*, which seems to be the genuine Sense of the words, as we have observed in our Dissertation upon that subject. 'Tis undoubted that ׀ is to be understood *Gen. 24. 23. Ch. 38. 11.* and perhaps 'tis understood in the abovemention'd place
rather

rather than express'd, to avoid the harshness of the Sound, which would happen there if the foregoing word terminated in כ. We have likewise shewn, upon (b) *Gen. 16. 12.* that כ *Similitudinis* (as the Grammarians use to call it) is frequently wanting. However, least we should forcibly seem to fasten our own meaning upon *Moses's* words, we have rendred it *verbatim* as 'tis in the Original. See a farther instance of an Ellipsis of the like nature (i) *Gen. 31. 53.*

We have brought some (k) Examples upon *Gen. 20. 16.* where *Vau* abounds, and if we did not know that it was redundant, the meaning would be perplex'd and obscure. It is manifestly redundant, *Gen. 22. 4.* Nay sometimes it abounds in the beginning of a Book, as in the first Verse of the Prophet *Jonah*, *And the Word of the Lord*, &c. who for all that is no more tacked to *Obadiab*, than *Obadiab* is to *Amos*. This occasion'd a certain Person to conclude absurdly, that all the Books of the Old Testament were the Collections of one and the same Man, connected together after that manner.

VII. To this may be added, their everlasting way of forming their Narrations, by Preterper-

(b) Where *Ishmael* is said in the Original to be *Onager homo*, instead of *instar Onagri*. So *Job 11. 12.* *Pullus Onagri nascitur homo*, instead of *rudis instar Pulli Onagri*.

(i) In the Hebrew 'tis, *The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their Father*; where the Particle *and* is wanting after *Nahor*.

(k) As that of *Levit. Et Postridie ET reliquia ex eo comedentur*. Where the Particle *Et* is certainly superfluous. See other Examples in *Ch. Noldius*, where he handles this Particle, *Numb. 74.*

fect or Future Tenses joyn'd together by the Conjunction *Vau*, which gave us no small trouble. 'Tis very certain that no Emphasis is design'd by it, and that it may best be express'd by Latin Participles, or other Particles, with which the *Latins* use to joyn the parts of their Sentences together, as all Interpreters have done, although some of them have used this Liberty more sparingly than others. However 'tis an eternal Drudgery in a strict Translation, frequently to change the structure of the Phrase; nor indeed can any thing excuse our so doing but mere Necessity. Therefore in the first Chapter of *Genesis* we were often forced to omit the Conjunction, and exchange it for the Latin Particles *verò, autem, deinde, tum, enim, postea, dein, quoque, etiam, atque*, and such-like. At other times we used Participles, as the Reader will discover in abundance of places, if he compares our Translation with the Hebrew. For instance, the two and thirtieth Chapter is thus joyn'd together. 1. *AND Jacob went—AND they met him.* 2. *AND Jacob said—AND he called the name of the place—* 3. *AND Jacob sent—* 4. *AND he commanded them—* 5. *AND the Messengers returned—* 7. *AND he was afraid—AND was in distress—AND he divided—* 8. *AND he said, &c.* Which would be insupportable in Latin.

There are several Versions of the Bible, especially into the Modern Languages, which have all along preserved this Conjunction, as if it added some peculiar Energy or Beauty to the Narration ;

tion; but those that are acquainted with the Genius of the Hebrew Tongue, can satisfy them of the contrary. In a plain Narration indeed, this troublesome Conjunction may pretty well be born in some other Tongues; but in an Argument or so, if it were used in French, it would not only wound the Ears in a wonderful manner, but so fatally disturb the Sense, that what would be clear in Hebrew, would be in French the most confused Stuff imaginable.

However in this, as well as other things, too great a License is to be avoided, least by omitting a Particle, or altering the structure of a Sentence, we may happen to alter the Sense, and render the Narration indirect and oblique. For by this means an unskillful Reader will imagine, that some things are related *en passant*, while the Historian makes haste to go to others that are more material. Thus according to our Translation, *Moses begins the 32d Chapter in these words, Jacobus iter suum perrexit, occurreruntque Angeli Dei, quos cum vidit Jacobus, hæc sunt ait Dei castra, eique loco Machanajim nomen imposuit.* By this manner of relating the Story, 'tis plain that the meeting of the Angels is made a more remarkable Circumstance, than if we had rendered it with *Castellio, Jacobus iter suum perrexit, in quo cum ei Divini Angeli occurrissent, ille eu visis ita dixit, hoc divinum agmen est. Itaque locum inde Machanaim appellavit.*

It was no small Perplexity to us in our Translation, that not only the Beginning, Progress

and Conclusion of the same thing, were express'd by Verbs that were tacked together by the never-failing Conjunction *Vau*, but likewise by one and the same Verb. Thus in the above-cited Narration, *and Jacob went*, the Hebrew word may be as well taken to signify the Beginning of a Journey, as the Continuation of it. However we translated it in the latter Sence, as the occasion there required.

VIII. We have already declared in the eighth Section of the former Dissertation, that we have follow'd the Masoretick Copy in our Translation: But although we call it *Copy* in the Singular Number, it may be called *Copies*, since by this name we comprehend both the Readings in the Text, and those in the Margin, which came from two several Books; unless we suppose that the *Keri* proceeded from the received way of reading in the Synagogue of *Tiberias* by some *Oral Tradition*, as 'tis called; and the *Ketib* to have been the Reading it self, written in a Book of venerable Antiquity. However the matter was, as these two Readings have been deservedly compared by the generality of Translators, so that which seem'd the best we justly preferr'd, and this is the conduct we follow'd. Sometimes indeed the *Keri* affords a more convenient Reading than the *Ketib*, but the latter very often is better than the former. But as I often thought of this, and several other things of the like nature, I suspected that the *Rabbins*, to inhance the value of their Trade, observ'd the same Conduct as the
Greek

Greek Rhetoricians were said to do, *Who least the World should imagine they knew but few things, invented abundance of strange Terms that were nothing to the purpose, that their Art might have the Reputation of being more difficult than really it was.* However, we have all along follow'd the Masoretick way of Pointing, except that with the generality of Interpreters we have not minded the Accents, but only followed the Sence and the Structure of the words. We shall not here repeat what several Learned Men have said upon this occasion. Let the Reader only turn over the 23d Chapter of *Buxtorf's Thesaurus*, lib. 2. where he treats of this Subject, and he will be satisfied that what I have advanced concerning the *Rabbins* is true, and that these Masters affect an abstruse unedifying Knowledge, and have clogg'd a Study, which otherwise would be easie enough, with endless Difficulties of their own raising. The two first words of *Genesis* sufficiently confute all that Learning.

Of greater moment is the distinction of *Verses*, as they are called, which however *Elias Levita* a Jew, and several Christians, have demonstrated to have been made by none of the Prophets. And indeed this distinction is not to be found in the Manuscript Copies of the Old Interpreters, nor can be used in many places, without maiming the Period, or dividing the Verb from what relates to it, which is extremely ridiculous. Therefore though to comply with a received Custom, and that the Citations might more easily be

found out, we have distinguished the Verses by Numbers, yet we have only had a regard to the Sence in the manner of our Pointing; Sometimes the Period (if the parts of a Sentence in the Latin Translation of an Hebrew Book may be called by that name) ends with the Verse, and sometimes it is carried beyond it. Nay sometimes it begins in the middle of a Verse, and sometimes it terminates with it, as seem'd most agreeable to the nature of the Latin Tongue.

The Reader will likewise find, both in our Translation and Paraphrase, two other sorts of Divisions, which we must give him an account of. We have not always follow'd the Chapters in the distinction of our Sections, although in complaisance to the ancient Custom, we have mark'd them on the top of the Page, and in the Margin, but we have divided the Argument into greater or lesser Sections, according as the Matters of Fact happen to be connected. And this we did upon the following Consideration, that both the whole Argument in one Series, and our Annotations upon it, might be read in the same order, because both the Divine Historian, and our Comments upon him, would by this means be better understood. 'Tis certain, the Jews have their own Sections, plainly different from our Chapters, which they follow in their publick Readings in their Synagogues.

Besides this, we have divided every Section into several *Paragraphs*, (to borrow a Term of Art from the Lawyers) though somewhat of the longest,

longest, which we supposed would contribute to the Perspicuity of the History, and be of great Advantage to the Reader. For where the particular Reasonings, or several parts of the Narration, are not continued as it were in the same breath with the rest, but divided by certain Intervals, we better comprehend both the Parts and Series of the Oration, and imprint it on our Memory, and if there be occasion, recollect it in our Minds. This is the reason why the Grammarians in former times, to distinguish the several parts of the Chorus's in their Tragedies, and the Lawyers to distinguish the Heads of their Laws, made use of *Paragraphs*. And therefore, though in the Manuscripts and in the Editions no distinctions of this nature do appear, (for we do not mind the Jewish) yet we thought it *à propos* to make use of them, as being clearly of opinion, that nothing ought to be despised, which tends to Perspicuity, and the Convenience of the Reader.

Nor will any one, as we imagine, blame these our Divisions, as if they contradicted what we so solemnly professed before, *viz.* That we would follow the Copies of the *Masorites*. For though these Divisions are very serviceable to Perspicuity and Order, yet they make not the least Alteration in the Reading or Pronouncing of words, in which two respects we said we look'd upon these Copies to be the most correct of all.

We hope the Reader will not be displeased, that after the Example of several Modern Interpreters,

preters, we have not written the Proper Names, as they are now a-days read by the Jews. Our Ears have been so long accustom'd to them, that we can scarce endure those that either speak or pronounce them otherwise; for who with any Patience could hear a Fellow thunder out *Che-nahan, Jitschak, Jabacob, Mosche, Jehoschubak, &c.* as those names are pronounced by the Jews, according to the roughness of their Language. There are also several words that were otherwise read by the LXX Interpreters than they are by the *Maforites*, as *Jerusalem*, not *Jerusalem*; *Nabuchodonosor*, not *Nebuchadnetzar*, and such-like. Which of them pronounced the rightest, we shall not now enquire, for we do not regard the thing it self, but only the Custom of the Christian Churches from the Beginning.

But then we observ'd this Conduct, to set down the more celebrated and usual Names after the Christian manner, and the less known and frequent after the Jewish, because, generally speaking, they do not seem to be written true in the Greek and Latin Books. Where-ever we have neglected to do it, the Reader is to impute it to our being too attentive upon the things themselves, and consequently not able to mind the words, and not imagine that we did it on purpose.

As for what regards the Letters, we have herein follow'd the Ancients, that is to say, *Beth* has always the power of the Latin *B*, *Zain* is pronounced like a *Z*, *Cbeth* as a *χ*, which comes the nearest of any to the double Aspiration of the

Hebrew

Hebrew Letter, which in our Commentary we have express'd by a double *H*, where we have observ'd how the Hebrew words are to be written; *Teth* like a *T*, *Jod* like the *J* Consonant of the French, *Caph* like a *χ*, *Ain* like an *H*, though 'tis of a different sound, but we could not think of a better. *Pe* like the *φ* of the Greeks; *Tsaddi* like *Ts*; *Koph* like *K*; *Schin* always after the same manner, that is, as *ch* is pronounc'd by the French, *sch* by the Germans, *sh* by the English; and lastly, *Tau* like the Greek *θ*. We could give our Reasons for this way of Pronunciation, if they would not take up too much room in this Dissertation. But those that are not so well vers'd in these things, may consult *Drusius's* old Hebrew Alphabet. But as we hinted before, in the more remarkable Names we have had a greater regard to Custom, than to the power of the Letters, and at other times thought it sufficient to make use of those Latin Letters that nearest resembled them.

IX. Forasmuch as we have endeavour'd to translate, and write Annotations upon the Sacred Volumes of the *Hebrews*, after so many Learned Men, we freely acknowledge that we have all along made use of the Labours of other Writers, and derived considerable Assistances from them. In the first place, we profess that we have always consulted the Old and Modern Translations in all difficult places, but so as never to give a blind assent to what they say, but especially the Moderns. We weigh'd and examin'd every Word
and

and Expression, if it contain'd any Difficulty, with no less Care and Application than if no one had gone this way before us, and therefore explain'd the Reasons of them which we knew to be certainly so. Yet a vast difference ought to be made between the Ancient and the later Versions, which we have accurately observed; for since, as we took notice in the former Dissertation, the ancient Interpreters were able to know the Significations of Words and Phrases from the use of the Languages then in being, their very Authority is by no means to be despised, when it opposes no Reasons deduced from Grammar. On the other hand, The Opinions of the Modern Interpreters, unless they are supported by the Truth, ought to be little regarded, because they had no other way to find out the Meaning of the Scripture, but by long Study as well as we; and therefore are not to be admitted, unless they give substantial Grounds for what they avouch. This is the Reason why we seldom borrow'd any Testimony from the new Translations, because that after all the plausible Reasons they give for their particular Versions; yet whether the Authority of their Translations goes for or against us, 'tis of it self of no weight at all. However we would not be so mis-understood as if we despised them, since we have frequently used them with great Advantage on our side; but we thought our selves obliged to make this open Confession, that the Reader might know once for all, why we alledge their Authority so seldom,

feldom. Besides, all or most of their Versions could not be compared, without too great a Fatigue to the Reader, and too tiresom a Prolixity; nor censured, without incurring the Envy of several ill-disposed Persons, which we would willingly avoid. Wherefore we thought it more advised, to omit all the Modern Versions whatever, and only to take our Testimonies from the Ancient, and to compare them one with another, though we are far from pretending to give an accurate Collation of them. This would have proved too tedious a Work, and indeed far different from our Design, who intended to find out what the Sacred Writers meant, and not how often or how much the Interpreters have deviated from their Sence.

We have likewise consulted the Annotations and Commentaries of several Writers, but more especially have we read over a far greater number of Books, that have occasionally treated of Sacred things, and explained several Passages of Scripture. Out of all these, whatever seem'd necessary, and to the purpose, have we inserted into our Commentaries, and indeed we have generally cited the names of the latter. But as for those who have professedly written upon the Sacred Books, we have more seldom made use of their Names, because, as they may be easily consulted, so large Collections out of their Books are in every Bodies hands. Our principal Aim was, to set down those Observations, by which we believed the Scriptures might be illustrated,
and

and not to swell our Volume with a Catalogue of Names, which have no Authority in things of this nature. But as we said before, we have more frequently cited by name those that have not writ a continued Commentary, as well out of Gratitude, because some of them have given us much greater Helps than all the Commentators put together; as also because we might give a short Abridgment of their Opinions; and it would be no superfluous Labour to direct the Reader where he might find them delivered more at large.

We have already, in part, explain'd the Design of our Commentary in the second Section, however we shall add, That we have observ'd that choice in selecting the Interpretations, as only to refer to those that seem'd to be the most probable of all, and lay down the Reasons that support them, omitting a Confutation of the rest, except a very few upon the most difficult places, and where they might be comprehended in a few words. It had been in our Opinion a prodigious Work, and (to speak a bold Truth) of very little use, if we had been obliged to cite the Opinions of all the Commentators, to have added their several Reasons, to have particularly confuted what we thought improbable, and to defend what we looked upon to be the best grounded. Such an Undertaking would far exceed in bulk every thing that has yet been publish'd upon the Scripture, and would rather overwhelm the Reader than help him. Indeed those
that

that attempt to explain the Bible, would be very unhappy Persons, if they were forced to set down all the Conjectures of other Men, for no other reason, but merely because they writ before them. Nay, the Readers would be in a more miserable Condition, if they were not allow'd to pass their Judgment upon the meaning of the Scripture, unless they heard and weigh'd the Opinions of all. Both of them must in their own defence lay aside all Examination of the Holy Volumes, since the Life of a Patriarch would not be long enough to go through so infinite a Labour. And therefore we have made use of our own Judgment in our choice of the Interpretations which we produce and examine in the doubtful places, and yet we would have no one infer from hence, that we despised all the rest, which either are already made publick, or lie conceal'd in the Cabinets of the Learned; for although out of an Infirmary common to all Mankind, and even through our own fault, we own we may err, yet it may easily happen, that while a Man is distracted with multiplicity of Thoughts, many things may escape him, and that several excellent Interpretations may be out abroad in the World, which he never so much as heard of.

How unwilling we are to neglect any probable Interpretation, where the Sence is doubtful, the Reader will soon be convinc'd, if he observes how often we refrain our hand, which we have already hinted, and need not here repeat.

X. Since

X. Since the Hebrew Tongue, such as it has come down to us, is contain'd in the small Volume of the Old Testament, wherein are several Words and Phrases that occur but once, or seldom, and are not sufficiently clear'd by the Sense of the places, we often thought it convenient to borrow assistance from the neighbouring Languages, as we saw had been practis'd by Men of the greatest Learning before us with general Approbation. If out of all the Latin Authors, we had only *Livy's* Works for instance now remaining, I make no question but that a world of obscure Passages in him, might be happily explain'd by the *Italian, Spanish* and *French* Languages; for there are still remaining in those Tongues, many Roots and Derivatives from an infinite number of Latin words, which might be of great use to illustrate that Historian; and therefore several Persons of the first Rank, not without good reason, have successfully borrow'd helps from the other Oriental Languages, to prove which Assertion Monsieur *Bochart* alone will furnish us with several Examples, and the Reader may farther satisfy himself by consulting our own Annotations.

And yet this assistance is not unadvisedly, or without warrantable grounds to be used; for it frequently happens, even in Languages which are derived from the same Stock, that words of a like sound have yet a very different Signification. For instance, *Abbacinare* in Italian, signifies *to make blind*; *Bassiner* in French, *to wash*; *Abbellare* in

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in Italian, *to please*; *Embellir* in French, *to adorn*; *Abbronzare* in Italian, *to dry*; *Bronzer* in French, *to blacken*. They that have leisure to turn over any Lexicon, and compare the two Tongues, will meet with an infinite number of the like instances. And this very thing, even in the Interpretation of Latin Authors, has often deceiv'd those Persons whose Mother-Tongues were derived from the Latin, while the words thus derived from the Latin, bear a quite different Signification. So while the *Latins*, by the word *exterminare*, mean *ejicere terminis*, *to turn one out of his Country*; the *Italians* by *estermiare*, and the *French* by *exterminer*, understand *to destroy by killing*, which are very different. Now if any *French-man* or *Italian* were to read in *Cicero*, *Orat. pro L. Flacco*, that by the Valour of *P. Valerius Publicola*, the Kings were *exterminati*, i.e. turn'd out, unless he were a Man of Learning above the common sort, he would be apt to imagine, it might be translated *Verbatim* as 'tis used in their own Language; whereas *Cicero* does by no means say, that the Kings were killed, but only turn'd out by *Valerius*. Nay, that most Learned Man, *Des. Heraldus*, in his Annotations upon *Arnobius*, lib. 1. p. 2. was of Opinion, that a certain place of that Writer was faulty, because he understood the word as it is used in the French Tongue, *Exterminati sumus dum longè*, says *Arnobius*, *examina mærorum tanta mortalium sunt importata sæculis*. His meaning is, That ever since the Christians leaving the Borders of *Judea*,

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were spread all over the Roman Empire, numberless Calamities, if we may believe the *Pagans*, afflicted the whole World. An infinite number of such Examples may be found, by those that will examine the Matter curiously.

And therefore the Hebrew words can only then be explain'd by the neighbouring Languages, where the Sence and Circumstance of places will naturally lead an Interpreter to them, for the Affinity of Sound and Signification are not sufficient. Nay, the desire of extolling the mighty use of the Oriental Languages, which they learn'd with incredible Toil and Industry, seems naturally to have led some Learned Men upon (1) seeking the Roots of the Hebrew names in those Tongues.

XI. The most infallible way to trace the Signification of an obscure word, is, in my Opinion, taken from the comparing of places, for when any word, where-ever we find it, has one certain limited Signification that suits it best, we cannot forbear but we must think it true; and

(1) Thus some Learned Men have derived the word *Schammim*, *Heavens*, from an Arabick word *Samaa*, or *Samisa*, or *Samava*, i. e. *high*, *lofty*, though the latter seems rather to be derived from the former; and 'tis probable that the Appellation of the word, which signifies *Heaven*, was found out before that which signifies *high*: Thus also *Ludolfus*, whose Incomparable Skill in the *Ethiopic* Language, is well known in the World, maintains that the word *Adama* is derived from an *Ethiopic* Root of the same sound, which signifies *beautiful and pleasant*; and that the Earth was so called for its being *pleasant*, and our first Parent for his *beauty*.

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this is perform'd by the Modern Interpreters, who are furnish'd with Lexicons and Concordances, with much greater Success than the Ancients could pretend to, who were destitute of these helps. Nevertheless they have not gone so far, as to leave no Discoveries to be made by the Diligence of Posterity. For it often happens, while they dissent from those of former Times, because they do not comprehend the Reasons they went upon, and while they indulge themselves too much in their own Conjectures which are wholly supported by obscure or ambiguous places, that they fail of attaining the true Signification of several words. 'Tis not enough to find out a Signification for a word, which perhaps is not amiss, for a Translator is obliged to give the Author's true meaning, and therefore ought to consult the *Usus loquendi*, which for the greatest part is best found out of the Old Interpreters and Languages. But what we endeavour'd to perform throughout the whole Work, will best appear by reading it; and how troublesome an Employment this Collation of places is, those Persons will soon understand, that are pleas'd to make the Experiment.

XII. The Original of words, where it can certainly be known, does often direct us to their true Signification, and therefore the Interpreters have spared no Pains to find out the Etymologies of obscure words. For Example, We have shewn what the word

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(m) *Pba*.

(m) *Pharaph* signifies, by finding its Root in the *Arabick*, Chap. 12. 15. who are called (m) *Hbartumim*, Gen. 41. 8. we have discover'd by the Signification of the words it is compounded of. We have likewise discover'd what are those (m) Ears which are call'd *Tsenoumoth* in the same Chapter, which was shown by no one, as we know of, before.

Bochart has borrow'd a great many things out of the same Fountain, which he has happily made use of, in tracing out the Nations that are call'd by their ancient Names in the tenth Chapter of *Genesis*; to which we have added a few of our own, as well to confirm some of his by new Arguments, as to confute others. See what we have written concerning the name of the *Tibarenes*, v. 2. of the *Riphus* and *Thogarma*, v. 3. of *Tharfi* and

(n) *Pharaoh* is not a proper Name, but a common Title to all the Egyptian Kings till the time of *Ezekiel*. 'Ο φαραώ, says *Josephus*, l. 8. c. 2. κατ' Ἀιγυπτίους ἐπὶ πάσι τοῖς βασιλεῦσι. Our Author derives it from an *Arabick* word still in use, *Pharaba*, *sumum tenuit*; and *Pharaben* not only signifies the top of any thing, but the Prince of a Family. *Hbartumim*, which we have rendred *Magicians*, he deduces from the *Syriack* and *Chaldæe* Roots *bbor* or *bbavar*, *vidit*, and *tsam*, *claudere*. *Clausum enim & ignota aliis hominibus videre seu scire existimabantur Magi*: For which reason *Aquila* translated it *μυστικῶν, occultatores*. As for the word *Tsenoumoth*, which our English Bibles have rendred *withered*, M. le Clerc has translated it *trica*, that is, *thrashed*. *Tsamma* in *Chaldæe* signifies a hard Stone; so *Tsenoumoth* may signify Ears of Corn that are thrashed by a Staff sharpened upon Stones. *Isaiah* 28. 27. makes mention of such a Staff; and *Torvenot*, Part 2. lib. 1. c. 5. tells us, that in most parts of the East they beat out the Grain with such a Flail.

(n) *Chit-*

(u) *Chittim*, v. 4. of the *Numidæ* and *Mauri*, v. 6. of the *Chasluæans* and *Capthoræans*, v. 14.

But here also especial care is to be taken that we be not deceiv'd by the Affinity of words; to prevent which, it must be supported by Historical Authority, as *Bochart* has done, and we have often endeavour'd to do the same. See for Example our Observations upon the name (o) *Charræ*, upon *Gen. 11. 31*. We must likewise take heed, not to deduce all our Reasonings from the bare Etymology, as the *Rabbins* often do, who have Histories ready at hand that are built upon them. Oftentimes words have so strangely deviated from their Primitive Signification into another, that those who use them do not at all think of their Original. The two Greek words *νεγονεω* and *νεοσυνεω*, are famous Instances

(x) By this name *Bochart* supposes *Italy* to be meant, but our Author concludes it to be *Macedonia*: 1. Because *Alexander* is said, 1. *Macc. 1. 1.* to have come out of the Land of *Chittim*; and *Ptolemy* the last King of *Macedon* is in the same Book, c. 2. 5. called the King of the *Chittims*. 2. Because the old name of *Macedon*, *Μακεδον*, *Μακεδον*, or *Μακεδον*, as we find it in *Stephanus*, *Hesychius*, and others, alludes to the word *Chittim*. We had not room to insert the rest.

(o) *Bochart*, lib. 2. c. 14. *Phel.* thinks it was so called from *Haras*, *Abraham's* Brother, which is scarce credible, since besides the difference in Writing, we are told v. 28. that *Haras* died at *Ur* of the *Chaldeans*, and we are no where inform'd that he was ever here. Now how is it probable that this City should take its name from a Stranger, who perhaps never saw it in his Life, and whose Father did not build it? Our Author with more reason derives it from *Hbaras exustus*, *adustus fuit*, by reason of the vast Deserts that lay round it, burnt up with the heat of the Sun. And such a Description *Plutarch* gives us of it in his Life of *M. Crassus*, so does *Appian* the Historian in *Particis*, p. 141. Ed. Steph.

of the Truth of this, as we could shew, if we were now treating of the Greek Tongue.

XIII. Furnish'd with these helps especially, not to mention any more, we begin our Translation and Commentary upon the Old Testament. 'Tis true, several Learned Men have gone the same way before us, especially in the last Age, and the beginning of this, who deserve great Commendation for their Performances. But if we may be allow'd to speak the Truth, though they neither wanted Abilities nor Diligence, yet two things stood in their way, which hinder'd them from giving any lasting Satisfaction to those that came after them.

The first was, The want of due Helps, which we now enjoy; for we may justly say of the Writers of this Age, that they have taken more Pains in illustrating and cultivating the Sacred Philology, than was done in two thousand years before. Hence it comes to pass, that we have such vast numbers of excellent Works to assist us to understand the Holy Volumes. The Truth of this sufficiently appears by the Polyglott Bibles, the Lexicons, and Treatises of all sorts that adorn our Libraries, which before had no such Treasures in them, and the reading of our Work, wherein they are so often commended, will undeniably evince it.

The other was, The general Bent of the last Age, rather towards Theological than Grammatical Learning, by reason of the new Controversies that then employ'd the whole Christian World;

so that the Interpreters rather busied themselves to confute Errors, than give us a plain and critical Enarration of the words. I will not say, that by thus inclining their Studies, Men of Parts and Learning have been so far led out of the way, that they have sought out Doctrines, which were true indeed, and agreeable to Religion, in improper places, though nothing be more certain; however 'tis manifest, that by so doing, they have neglected several helps necessary for the understanding of Languages, since 'tis impossible for a Man to grasp every thing at the same time. They that have read the most celebrated Commentaries of the Divines of the last Age, and examined their Translations, know how true this is, and to prove it to those that never looked upon them, would be labour lost.

They that employ'd their time most this way, chiefly depended upon some late Grammarians of the Jews and Modern *Rabbins*, but were in a manner destitute of all other Assistances of Critical Learning. I would fain know which of them in the last Age, applied the Histories of the old Eastern People who border'd upon the *Hebrews*, and what we find in ancient Authors relating to their Manners, Opinions, and their Country, towards the Illustration of the Scriptures; two or three perhaps and no more. Nevertheless St. *Jerom* had long ago advis'd, though no body would regard him, That 'twas one thing to compose Books of our own, as for instance about Covetousness, Faith, Virginity, Widows, and upon each of these Heads to pre-

duce Testimonies from all parts of the Bible, and set them off with a little secular Eloquence, and make a magnificent appearance upon such common subjects; and another thing to dive into the Sence of the Prophets and Apostles, to know why they writ so, by what reasons they support their Opinions, what peculiar things the Idumeans, the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Tyrians, the Philistines, the Egyptians and Assyrians have to themselves in the Old Testament. For 'tis necessary, continues he, that they should have different Causes, and Arguments, and Originals, according to the Diversity of Places, and Times, and Men, to whom they were written. But neither in St. Jerom's time, nor afterwards, did any one, before our Age, regard this Advice as it deserved; so that our Ancestors have left us a very ample Harvest for this sort of Learning; upon this account we may pretend to set out more accurate Translations and Annotations upon the Scriptures than they did, though we are otherwise inferior to them in Wit, Learning and Industry. In their times Theological and Moral Precepts could hardly be inculcated enough, but now since they are known to all, we lie under no necessity to dwell upon them any longer. Therefore have we employ'd our selves in that way of Interpretation which we have describ'd in this Dissertation, and have endeavour'd to observe the Laws we enjoyn'd our selves very Religiously. How we have succeeded in our Performance, let other Persons judge, who have pursued these Studies out of a desire to find out the Truth,

Truth, to whose Censure we most willingly submit our Undertaking, and shall be always ready to receive their Instructions and Emendations, with all imaginable Gratitude.

Dissertation III.

Concerning Moses, the Writer of the Pentateuch, and his Design in writing.

- I. *The Necessity of Treating of the Writer of the Pentateuch.* II. *Three sorts of things we find in the Pentateuch; 1. Those that happen'd before Moses: 2. The Actions of Moses, which were without doubt first written by himself: 3. Other things which really are, or at least seem to be, later than the Age of Moses.* III. *Those Passages, which some People imagine to be later than Moses, are examined.* IV. *That very few places can come under that Denomination, however, that the Pentateuch ought not to be given away from Moses upon that account.* V. *That 'tis uncertain who made those Additions.* VI. *That the Design of the Writer, is of great Importance towards the better understanding of his Writings.* VII. *Moses's Design in writing the Pentateuch, inquired into.*

THE two former Dissertations had a relation to the other Books of the Old Testament,

ment, as well as to those of *Moses*; but now we intend to treat of the *Mosaical* Writings, exclusive of the rest; for we cannot well omit the Discussion of that celebrated Question, which has been so warmly debated in this Age, viz. *Whether Moses writ the Pentateuch*. Some Authors that have made no small noise in the World, have positively asserted that it was not writ by *Moses*; or at least, that, such as it has come down to our hands, it is not wholly his. However we in our Commentaries, according to the received Opinion of the most ancient Times, have all along attributed it to him. Therefore we must now enquire, which of the two Opinions is most agreeable to Truth; and this we shall perform after such a manner, as not to bring the least Reproaches or invidious Reflections, but only Reason and Arguments, against those that are of the contrary side; neither out of an unmeasurable Prepossession, shall we deny those things that are evidently plain. Then after we have fully proved the Pentateuch to be the Work of *Moses*, we shall endeavour to find out his Design in writing it. No Thinking Man will doubt, but that both these Disquisitions are of the last Consequence towards the better understanding of these Books; and since they could not so conveniently be handled in our Commentary, we shall dispatch them in this Dissertation with all the brevity we can.

II. There are three sorts of things to be found in the Writings of *Moses*, which we must here

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take into our Consideration. We shall have soon done with the two first, but we shall dwell somewhat longer upon the last. The first comprehends those things which were done before *Moses* was born, at least before he came to years of Maturity; of which nature is the History compriz'd in *Genesis*, and the beginning of *Exodus*, and here (if we except a few places which we shall hereafter examine) we find nothing that may induce us to believe, that *Moses* was not the Author. No body doubts, but that the Creation of the World, and the other Matters of Fact, which are there related down to *Moses's* Parents, might be written by him. Learned Men only doubt whether *Moses* really writ them, and if he writ them, whether he was the first that convey'd them down to Posterity in writing, or whether he might not take what he has from ancienter Memoirs, which were afterwards lost.

If *Moses* was the first that writ of these Matters, and they were never consign'd in Writing before, it necessarily follows, that he must either have them by an immediate Revelation from God, or else that they were communicated to him by Men, who preserved them in their Memories; for there is no other way for him to arrive to the Knowledge of them. Now he nowhere tells us, they were communicated to him by God; nor, though such a thing is possible, yet since *Moses* is silent in the matter, dares any one pretend to affirm it as an undoubted Truth, but only the *Rabbins*, who were never asham'd
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of Lying, and whose Assertions consequently are not much to be regarded. Now it scarce seems probable, that so many Names, and the Particulars of so many Years, could be handed down by Tradition. 'Tis much more probable, that the ancient Patriarchs left them in Writing, and so transmitted them to their Posterity; which Monuments coming into the hands of *Moses*, he diligently copied and connected them with the History of his own Age; for what Design and Purpose we shall afterwards enquire. Now what sort of Writings they were, and how numerous, only those Persons can inform us, who lived in those Times, if they were restor'd to Life again. We conjecture that some of them were written, *carminibus*, 'Ομοιοτελῶσις, in Verses of the same Termination, wherein we shall at some better convenience, shew the Poetry of the Hebrews to consist. (a) See our Notes upon Chap. 4. 23, 24. and Chap. 7. 11. 'Tis certain that almost all Nations in the World preserved the Fragments of their ancientest Histories in Verse, as several Learned Men

(a) *Lamech's* Speech, *Gen.* 4. 23. *M. le Clerk* has observ'd to consist of words of the same Termination in the Hebrew, and 'tis his Opinion, that *Moses* borrow'd abundance of Passages from ancient Verses, in which Antiquity used to preserve the Memory of all remarkable Transactions before the discovery of Letters. The same remark he makes upon Chap. 7. 11. adding, That there is something of a Poetical Spirit in the latter. But I look upon this Criticism to be ill grounded, for why might not such a Passage fall from *Moses* unawares, as well as this Hexameter Verse from *Tully* in one of his Orations, *In quâ me non inficior mediocriter esse?* Besides, who would conclude that *Tacitus* compil'd his History out of Poetical Monuments, because he begins with, *Urbum Romanam à principio Reges habuere.*

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have proved : And it appears, that even among the *Hebrews*, in *Moses's* time, the Memory of great Actions was celebrated in Verse, which the People learn'd by Heart, as the Songs of *Moses* himself, that are extant both in *Exodus* 15. and *Deuteronomy* 32. demonstrate. Nay, God himself commanded the latter to be learn'd by the Children of *Israel*, as we find in *Deut.* 31. 29. Nor ought any one to wonder, that we carry the beginnings of Poetry so high, since Musick, by the Invention of some Instruments, flourish'd even before the Deluge, as *Moses* expressly tells us, *Gen.* 4. 21. Nay, 'tis probable, that Men employ'd themselves in Vocal Musick, before they thought of the Instrumental. But though some few memorable Transactions might be preserv'd in Verse, which the long-liv'd Patriarchs perhaps might have by heart, yet a Chronology, including the Calculation of so many years, seems too unruly an Argument to have been included in them. And *Moses* makes mention of the *Book of the Battels of the Lord*, of which we shall treat when we come to *Numbers* 21. 14.

The second sort of things, which we read in the Pentateuch, 'tis evident were written by *Moses* himself. First, God commanded him to write the Law, and *Moses* is accordingly said to have written it. In *Exodus* 34. 27. God, after he had repeated the chief Precepts of the Law, thus speaks to *Moses*, *Write thou these words, for after the Tenour of these words, I have made a Covenant with thee and with Israel.* But in *Exodus* 24. 4. after several

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Laws were made, *Moses* is said to have written *all the Words of the Lord*; and frequent mention is made of the Book of the Covenant, or Law, as in the seventh Verse of the same Chapter. In *Deuteronomy* 28. 58. *If thou wilt not observe, says Moses, to do all the words of this Law, that are written in this Book*, which perhaps he then held in his hands; see likewise v. 61. and Chap. 29. 20, 27. where the Curses are said to be writ in it. This does *Moses* deliver to the *Levites*, Chap. 31. 9. and commands it v. 26. *to be put in the side of the Ark, that it may be a Witness against Israel*. Mention is made of the same Book, as if it comprehended all the Divine Laws, after the Death of *Moses*, *Joshua* 1. 8. where *Joshua* is commanded by God, not to suffer that Book to depart out of his Mouth, that is, perpetually to read it, and administer Justice to the People out of the Laws deliver'd in it. See likewise Chap. 8. 31.

'Tis true indeed, that the *Jews* by the word *Thorab, Law*, are used to understand the whole *Pentateuch*; nevertheless 'tis certain, that it is of a doubtful Signification, and may signifie more or fewer Laws. So *Joshua* 8. 32. it is said, that *Joshua wrote a Copy of the Law of Moses*, upon twelve Stones of an Altar, as he was commanded by the Book of the Law. See *Deut.* 27. 2, 3. in all which places *Thorab* signifies only a small part of the Law, as Learned Men have observed, because it was not possible for the whole five Books of *Moses* to be writ

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upon twelve Stones joyn'd together to make a four-square Altar. But 'tis evident from the places above-mentioned, that at least all the Precepts of the Law were written by *Moses*, and indeed so many troublesome Laws could not be remembred, unless their Memories were refresh'd by a written Book, especially when they began to be observed. Some Persons are of Opinion, that only the Book of *Deuteronomy* is to be understood in *Joshua*, and the above-cited places of *Deuteronomy*; and that afterwards that Book alone was found in the time of *Josiah* King of *Judah*. But although *Deuteronomy* is the Repetition of the Law, yet many things are there briefly handled; neither are they so clearly described, that the *Israelites*, who were none of the acutest People in the World, and always inclin'd to Idolatry, could have an accurate Knowledge of the whole Law, only out of that Book; and therefore if *Moses* design'd to have it all observ'd, as no body questions but he did, he ought to have given the *Israelites* a larger Exposition of it; and this he actually perform'd; for we have shown from two places of *Exodus*, that the Laws which we see there, were written by him, and not *Deuteronomy* alone. The Book in which he writ them, is called, *The Book of the Covenant*, *Exod. 24. 7.* which after he had solemnly read before the People, without question he did not throw it away, since it was as it were a publick Instrument, wherein were preserved the Laws of the Covenant made with God. Besides *Moses* writ
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some other Treatises not extant in *Deuteronomy*, of which we shall discourse hereafter, and which without doubt he bequeath'd to Posterity, since they have arrived safe to our hands. Therefore the above-mentioned Conjecture, that only *Deuteronomy* was left us by *Moses*, is altogether groundless, and contrary to the Sacred History.

Matters being thus, no one will doubt that the Laws which are contain'd in *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers* and *Deuteronomy*, are the very same that were written by *Moses*. 'Tis certain, that the Laws, which were written in *Moses*'s time, were still extant in the Reign of *Josiah*, as it appears from 2 *Kings* 22. nor can any tolerable Reason be assign'd, why they were not incorporated at least into the Books of the *Pentateuch*. Therefore whatever Laws we find in the *Pentateuch*, we ought to look upon them as written by *Moses* himself, and consequently the greatest part by much of the *Pentateuch* came from the same hand. Nay 'tis evident, that several other things were writ by him.

Secondly, *Moses* is said, *Deut.* 31. 22. to have written the Song which we find in the following Chapter; and since that is set down word for word as he made it, we cannot deny that the rest which belong to the Law, are the very words of *Moses*, without opposing the plainest Truths imaginable.

Thirdly, He is in exprefs Terms said to have written some part of the History of the *Hebrews*, for he transmitted in Writing the War against the

the *Amalekites*, and God's Sentence pronounced against them, *Exod.* 17. 14. After the like manner he writ the several Mansions of the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, *Numb.* 33. 2. *Moses wrote their goings out according to their Journeys, by the Commandment of the Lord.* And yet that part of their History, which we find in that Chapter of *Numbers*, was not of so great a Consequence as to be writ before the rest; from whence it naturally follows, that the four last Books of the *Pentateuch*, at least, were written by *Moses*, for if he writ all the Laws, and the whole History of *Israel*, he is certainly the Author of these Books, wherein nothing else is contain'd; for who, after *Moses* had once written, would attempt to write and model them anew? Indeed if we consider the frequent Repetitions which we met with in these Books, and the great disorder in the delivery of the Law, we shall soon be inclin'd to think, that these Books are come to our hands, just as they were at several times first written by *Moses*, in that long uncomfortable Pilgrimage in *Arabia Deserta*: For if they had been compil'd out of *Moses's* Memoirs, they had certainly been digested into better order, and all the Repetitions had been cut off, as is usually done in Works of that nature; but if we except a few Passages, they have descended to Posterity just as they were publish'd at first, when a full Collection was made of all that *Moses* writ, and at several times repeated to the *Israelites*, who after all these Repetitions, did scarce understand their own Law sufficiently. But about the

middle of this Age, a certain Author that shall be nameless started up, whose Opinion afterwards found some Disciples, and these have been so hardy, as to deny that *Moses* was the Writer of the *Pentateuch*, and pretend to shew several Passages in him, which were manifestly writ since his time. *Aben-ezra* indeed had formerly deliver'd himself much to the same purpose, but worded it so warily, and obscurely, that he is hardly to be understood. Now we will here consider their Reasons.

III. Their Arguments are partly drawn from the Stile of the whole Book, and partly from particular places. As for the former, they pretend that the difference of Stile, which is easily observ'd in the *Pentateuch*, plainly shews, that it was not written by one hand; for some places are writ in a short compendious Stile, full of *Ellipses*, and others in a loose redundant one. But this Objection soon vanishes, if we consider, that the variety we find in these Volumes, is rather to be ascribed to the unrefin'd Condition of the *Hebrew* Tongue, than any diversity of Writers. Others object, That *Moses* never speaks of himself in the *Pentateuch* in the first Person, but that all his Actions and Speeches are related in the third; but these People are easily confuted by the Example of *Xenophon*, *Cæsar* and *Josephus*, and other Historians of the first Class, who whenever they have occasion to speak of themselves, alway do it in the third Person.

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But 'tis not so easie to solve some Arguments, that are drawn from several places of the *Pentateuch*, although some of them I must own are trivial enough, as will appear by examining them. In the first place they object that passage in *Gen. 2. 11, 12*. *The name of the first is Pison, that is it which compasseth the whole Land of Havilah, where there is Gold, and the Gold of that Land is good; there is Bdelium, and the Onyx-stone.* Now this they say was written by one that lived in *Chaldea*, because *Pison*, as they imagine, is a branch of the *Euphrates*, which after it has washed *Chaldea*, falls into the *Persian Gulf*; and then the Geography of these Countries, according to them, does not seem to be so well known in *Moses's* time, that so particular an account could be given of them, especially if we consider at what a great distance they lay. But we have shown that the Country of (b) *Havilah* was nearer to *Judea*, and that (b) *Pison* was perhaps the *Chrysorrhoas* that runs by *Damascus*. But supposing *Chaldea* is here meant, yet by reason of the Merchants that traffick'd from thence into *Egypt*, that Country might very well be known; for if in *Jacob's* time Caravans of Merchants travelled from *Gilead* into *Egypt*, why might they not likewise come from *Chaldea* too thither?

(b) Bochart, l. 5. c. 5. *Hieroz.* Part 2. supposes the Land of *Havilah* to be that part of *Arabia* near *Catipha* and *Bahare*, where precious Stones are dug up; and the *Pison* to be that Branch of the *Euphrates*, which *Petrus Teixeira*, an Eye-witness, affirms to fall into the *Persian Gulf* at *Catipha* near *Bahare*. But our Author places *Havilah* nearer to *Judea*, not far from *Calistyría*. In 1 *Sam.*

15. 7. *Saul* is said to have destroy'd the *Amalekites* with Fire and Sword, from *Havilah* until thou comest to *Sur*, that is over against *Egypt*. Now who can believe that *Saul* marched with his Forces an hundred and fifty *German Miles*, (for so much 'tis at least, from the Frontier of *Israel* to *Havilah*, in *Bochart's* own Tables) especially if he considers how destitute of all Provisions *Arabia Deserta* was, and that *Saul's* Army consisted of 200000 fighting Men. Besides if *Havilah* had been more remote than *Sur*, the Sacred Historian would not have said, that *Saul* wasted the Country of the *Amalekites* from *Havilah* to *Sur*, but from *Sur* to *Havilah*. Therefore *Sur* and *Havilah* he concludes to be the Borders of those People, the former to the South, and the latter to the North. As for the *Pison*, he is of opinion that some Footsteps of it are to be found in *Chrysorrhoas*, which rises near the City of *Damascus*, plentifully supplies it with Water, and is in a manner wholly lost in several little Streams, as *Strabo*, l. 16. and *Pliny*, l. 5. c. 18. tell us. *Petrus Belsarius*, Observat. l. 2. c. 91. says, That *Damascus* is so abundantly furnish'd with Water from this River, that not only every private House, but every Garden has a Fountain out of it. Now this Description admirably agrees with the Hebrew word *Phison*, which is derived from the Hebrew Root *Phasha*, diffusus suit. The Greeks called it *Chrysorrhoas*, because of the Gold Sands found in it, which *Moses* informs us was very good in the Land of *Havilah*. For the same reason *Pactolus*, a River of *Lydia*, bore the same name.

2. The same is suspected of Chap. 10. 8. and the following Verses, where a larger account is given of *Nimrod* and his Empire, than there is of any other Heads of Families and Countries; and this they imagine might be said more agreeably after the *Babylonian* Captivity, than before the *Israelites* had any manner of Commerce with those People. But the mighty Reputation of *Babylon*, and the other Cities there mention'd, seem to afford sufficient Cause, why *Moses* should write a little more particularly about their Beginnings, who otherwise of himself, is apt enough to make such Discoveries of Antiquity.

Antiquity. As we have frequently (c) observ'd upon *Genesis*.

As for what concerns the name of *Nineve*, which seems to be of a later date than *Moses*, as deriving its name from *Ninus* the Son of *Belus*, who according to the exactest Computation of Chronology, flourish'd about the time of *Deborah*, perhaps the Original of it was otherwise than is commonly related. For who in so great an Antiquity, and so vast a defect of ancient Monuments, dare positively affirm any thing? Perhaps too some one else might add it to *Moses's* words, as Learned Men have conjectured of several other Names.

3. 'Tis pretended, that the following passage, *And the Canaanite was then in the Land*, Chap. 12. 6. could only come from a Writer who lived after the *Canaanites* were turn'd out of their Country. But what Judgment is to be made of these words, we have sufficiently

(c) Thus in the 35th Chapter of *Genesis* v. 8. *Moses* tells us why the Oak, under which *Rebecca's* Nurse was buried, was called *Allon-bachouth*, i. e. the Oak of Weeping; not that this Circumstance was of greater moment than several others which he omits, as *Jacob's* coming home to his Parents, *Rebecca's* death, &c. but only because he had a mind to acquaint his Reader, why this Oak, which lasted to his own time, was called so. 'Tis not the most unuseful part of an Antiquary's Business, to give the Original of Names. Hence it is that we have an account of the name of *Babel*, Chap. 11. 9. of *Zoar*, Chap. 19. 22. of *Beithel*, Chap. 28. 9. Not to instance in any more.

shewn in our (d) Commentary upon that place; neither is it necessary for us to repeat it here, perhaps they might be added by a later hand, after the Expulsion of the *Canaanites* by the Children of *Israel*; and perhaps 'tis one of those superfluous Observations which frequently occur in the Sacred Volumes, which might have been omitted, without any Injury done to the History.

4. In Chap. 13. 8. we meet with the word *Hebron*, by which name that Town did not go till after *Moses's* time, as appears from *Joshua* 14. 15. Chap. 15. 13. where it is said to have changed its old name *Arba* in the days of *Caleb* and *Joshua*; and indeed that City seems to derive its name *Hebron* from the Nephew of *Caleb*. But Learned Men have rightly observed, that this passage might be added by another hand since the time of *Moses*, to expound an obscure Name by one that was better known. See likewise Chap. 21. 2.

5. The like Conjecture is drawn from the word *Dan*, which we find Chap. 14. 14. and 'tis urged, that the name of it was *Laisb* or *Leshem*, till it was taken by the Children of *Dan*. See

(d) Some are of opinion, that out of the eleven Families of the *Canaanites*, some of them were called so, *as* *Hebron*, above the rest, who inhabited these places. And 'tis true indeed, that the *Canaanites* are often mentioned as a particular Tribe, see *Gen.* 13. 7. Chap. 15. 21. *Exod.* 3. 8, 17. Chap. 33. 2. Chap. 34. 11. and elsewhere. But then they are expressly said to have lived near the *Sea*, and near *Jordan*, but not at *Sisem*. However perhaps they dwelt here in *Abraham's* time, and *Moses* had a regard to that. Our Author prefers this Solution to the rest.

Joshua

Joshua 9.47. But we have handled this Matter in our Commentary, where we plainly make it appear, that it is not well (e) grounded.

6. In Chap. 20.7. we read the word (f) *Nabi*, a Prophet, which notwithstanding seems not to have been in use till after *Moses's* Age, *1 Sam.* 9.9. After all, perhaps the meaning of the Sacred Historian may be this, That not so much the word *Nabi* was left off in the time of *Saul*, as that it was not used in that Phrase, *Let us go to the Seer*.

7. *Moses* speaking of the Mountain, where *Abraham* was to have offer'd up his Son as a

(e) *Josephus* relating this History, *lib.* 1. c. 20. tells us, That *Abraham* attack'd the *Assyrians*, *æti Daror*, near *Dan*, and adds, For this is the name of one of the heads of *Jordan*. If this is true, 'tis certain that this Head was so called, long before the City *Lais* obtained its new name; and afterwards when the Children of *Dan* possessed themselves of these places, that not only this Mountain, but the neighbouring City took the same name. A place may happen to receive the same Appellation for two several causes, as for Instance, *Bersheba*, i. e. the Well of the Oath, was so called from two Covenants that were made near it. See *Gen.* 21.31. Chap. 26.33. And this might be the case of *Dan*.

(f) This word seems to have been in use with the *Hebrews* at first; afterwards the word *Roe* a Seer was more commonly used; but at last *Nabi* came in fashion again. *Horace de Arte Poetica* has a passage which is very applicable to this purpose.

*Malta renascuntur qua jam cecidera, cadentque
Qua nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si voles usus.*

The same Fate has befallen this word, which that judicious Poet observes to have happened to several more: It was used in *Moses's* time; under the Judges it grew out of date, and after them was again revived.

Sacrifice, has the following words, Chap. 22. 14. *And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh, as it is said to this day, in the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen.* Some are of opinion, that this was the Mountain *Moria* upon which the Temple was built, and which did not go by that name till the Temple was erected upon it. But this is a meer Conjecture, and although *Moriah* and *Jehovah-Jireh* seem to signify the same thing, yet it does not follow from thence that 'tis but one name. With no greater reason on their side do others observe, that *Moses* could not be the Author of that Proverbial Saying (for so they call it) *Prospicietur in monte Jehovæ*, since the Person that added it to the Text, seems to speak of it as if it were still used in his time. But why might not *Moses* say, that this Proverb was in use *etiamnum hodie*, since perhaps this Form was used, from the days of *Abraham* down to *Moses*. This I am certain of, that there is nothing in the whole Matter, which does not fitly agree with *Moses*'s time. There was a convenient distance enough between *Abraham* and *Moses*, for the latter to take notice, that the aforesaid Form, of which *Abraham* was the Author, continued till his own time. Nay, if the Interval had not been quite so great, yet *Moses* might very warrantably express himself after that manner, since this Form is sometimes used by those that writ but a few years after, of which we find

find two Examples in St. *Matthew*, Chap. 27. 8. Chap. 28. 15. as others have observed before me. To these we may add such-like passages out of St. *Jerom*, for he, speaking of the Ecclesiastical Writers of his own Age, expresses himself after the same manner, *Sæbadius* Bishop of *Agennum* in *France*.—*Vivit usque hodie*, lives till now, or to this day, *decrepitâ senectute*, μέλει νῦν Ζῆ, as the Greek Interpreter has rendered it. *Didymus* of *Alexandria*.—*Vivit usque hodie*, and has passed the eightieth year of his Age; πρεσβύτιον ἔχει τῶδε. *Epiphanius* Bishop of *Salamis* in *Cyprus*.—*Supereſt usque hodie*, and in his old Age is writing several Books. *Eunomius* of the *Arian* Party, *usque hodie vivere dicitur*. *Priscillianus* Bishop of *Abila*, *usque hodie*, to this very day, is accused by some, of the *Gnostick* Heresie, though others maintain that he was not guilty of what is laid to his Charge. *Priscillianus* was slain by *Maximus* the Tyrant, but seven years before St. *Jerom* writ this. We have touched upon this somewhat largely, because several places in the Sacred Historians are illustrated by this Observation.

8. Likewise they object the name of *Migdal Eder*, Gen. 35. 21. that is, *The Tower of the Flock*; by which name is supposed to be meant, a Tower upon one of the Gates of *Jerusalem*, which was called *the Sheep-gate*; but this is uncertain; however if we may believe latter Ages, *the Tower of the Flock* did not belong

to *Jerusalem*. Consult our (g) Observations upon this place of *Genesis*. Nor is there any reason why this place should not retain its ancient name in following Ages.

9. They suppose that *Moses* could not possibly write, Chap. 36. 31, nor reckon up so many Kings of *Edom*. Now these were the Kings that reigned in *Edom*, before there was any King in *Israel*. After this follow the names of eight Kings, who reign'd successively one after another, and make as many Generations as there were from *Jacob* to *Obed*, Grand-father to *David*, and Contemporary to *Saul* the first King of *Judea*; since from *Jacob* to *Moses* there are only four, taking *Moses* into the account. Now some answer, That *Moses* foreknew that the *Israelites* would set up Kings over themselves, to which purpose they cite *Deuteronomy*, Chap. 17. 14. But is it credible, that God likewise revealed to him, how many Kings the *Edomites* were to have, and by what Names they were to be called, before the *Jewish* Theocracy was turned into a Kingly

(g) There was a Tower at *Jerusalem*, or not far from that City, of the same name, as we are informed by *Micah* 4. 8. *St. James*, following the Tradition of the Inhabitants in his time, places it not far from *Bethlehem* in his Epitaph of *Paula*, who after she had visited *Bethlehem*, Not far from thence, says she, she descended to the Tower of *Ader*. i. e. of the Flock, near which *Jacob* fed his Flocks, and the Shepherds watching by night, were so happy as to hear, Glory be to God on high, &c. Which as it might be true, so it receives no great Confirmation from so Fabulous a Voucher as Tradition is.

Govern-

Government? Now *Moses* no where tells us, that such a Revelation happened to him, and indeed whoever will read over the nine Verses, wherein the Succession of the Kings of *Edom* is contained, will soon be satisfied that there is no Prophecy in the case; for the Sacred Historian there speaks as of a thing past and gone, that nothing can be more clearly express'd: For what more evident Testimony can there be given that the thing was already past, than these Phrases, *And he died, and there reigned in his stead?* Somebody, whose name has escaped me, solves it another way; for he humbly supposes that these Kings reign'd at the same time in different places; and for my part I humbly suppose he never read this Chapter, his Head being certainly fill'd with Metaphysical Contemplations. To deal ingeniously with the Reader, the best way to get clear of this Difficulty, will be to own frankly, that these nine Verses from V. 31 to 39, were added by some one who lived after the Kingly Government was set up in *Israel*.

10. Some have objected, that *Canaan* is called *the Land of the Hebrews*, Chap. 40. 15. which, in propriety of Speech, could be said only at that time, when the *Hebrews* had possessed themselves of it; and that therefore the Sacred Historian, who was later than *Moses*, accommodated *Joseph's* way of speaking to the Style of his own time. But we have

have (b) answered this Objection in our Commentary.

11. In *Exodus* Chap. 6. after the Sacred Historian has inform'd us of *Aaron's* and *Moses's* Pedigree, he thus goes on v. 26. *These are THAT Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said, bring out the Children of Israel from the Land of Egypt according to their Armies. These are THET that spoke to Pharaoh King of Egypt to bring out the Children of Israel from Egypt. These are THAT Moses and Aaron.* Now we do not urge the third Person here, say some, which 'tis plain several Historians have used, but the Demonstrative Pronouns *that* and *they*, which *Moses* would scarce make use of while he was alive, and writing of himself. But we must here call to mind, that *Moses* did not only write to his own Age, wherein his Father and Grand-father were well known, but likewise to the following Ages, to whom he seems in this place to direct his Discourse, and not to his Contemporaries, who knew

(b) 'Tis plain enough, says our Author upon this place, that after *Josbua* had led the *Israelites* into *Canaan*, all that Country might be called, and really was called, *the Land of the Hebrews*: But if we should take it in this Sence, it would follow that this Passage was written after the time of *Josbua*, as some have believed. If we would have it written by *Moses*, we must only understand some part of *Canaan* where the *Hebrews* generally fed their Flocks without any disturbance. For though they were Strangers, and wandered from one place to another, yet those Fields might properly enough be said to belong to them, where they had pitch'd their Tents for several years, with the Consent of the old Inhabitants. Now it appears by the Book of *Genesis*, that they sojourn'd for the greatest part about *Mamre* and *Hibran* as far as *Sichen*, partly by the Permission of the Natives, and partly by Force.

all

all these Particulars well enough. It was of Consequence for them to know, that *Aaron* the Brother of *Moses* was descended from *Levi*, and that he was the first Head of the Sacerdotal Families; therefore it ought not to seem strange to any one, that in this place *Moses* and *Aaron* are as it were pointed at, and their Genealogy shown to the *Israelites* of future Ages.

12. The words of *Exodus* 16. 35. are alledged, which they pretend could not be written till after the death of *Moses*. *And the Children of Israel did eat Manna forty years, until they came to a Land inhabited: They did eat Manna until they came unto the Borders of the Land of Canaan.* For it appears from the fifth Chapter of *Joshua*, that Manna did not cease till after the death of *Moses*. To this some answer, That *Moses* fore-knew, as is evident from *Numbers* 14. 33. that the Manna would cease after the end of forty years, so soon as the *Israelites* entred the Land of *Canaan*. But this is here related, and not foretold, and therefore *Moses* uses the Preterperfect Tense *Comederunt, did eat*: For which reason I should rather chuse to say, that this Verse, as well as some more, has been added to the Text by way of Parenthesis, occasioned by what immediately goes before, where mention is made of an Omer full of Manna to be laid up in the Ark.

13. Some Persons deny the following Verse to belong to *Moses*, *But an Omer is the tenth part of an Ephab*; because when a Measure is in use, it is not customary to define it; and therefore they

they believe that after the *Hebrews* were scatter'd into several Countries, and consequently began to use the Measures of other Nations, this was purposely written, that they might understand which Measure was meant in this History. The same is observed about their Money, *Numb.* 3. 47. Chap. 18. 16. But it does not appear, that the Jews used any other Measures in *Palestine*, so as to make it necessary to define the old Measures; nor does an *Ephah* seem to be better known than an *Omer*. But *Moses*, who instituted the *Jewish Commonwealth*, might designedly give a short Description of the Coins and Measures, to the end that they might not afterwards be changed.

14. The Sacred Historian thus begins, *Deut.* 1. 1. *These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel on this side Jordan in the Wilderness.* From whence they gather that the Writer of this Book was then in *Canaan*. But we have discussed the

* *M. le Clerk* has promised the World a Paraphrase and Comment upon the other four Books of *Moses*, but they have not seen the light as yet.

Ambiguity of the Particle *Bheber* upon * that place of *Deuteronomy* to which we refer the Reader.

15. In the same Book Chap. 2. 12. there are some words which they pretend could never come from *Moses*, *The Horims dwelt in Sur before time, but the Children of Elau succeeded them when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead, as Israel did unto the Land of his Possession.* But at that time when

Moses

Moses writ this, two Tribes and a half had already settled themselves near the head of *Jordan*, and turn'd out the old Inhabitants, and *Moses* had an Eye to that.

16. Chap. 3. 11. Thus the Sacred Writer speaks of the King of *Basan*. For only *Og King of Basan* remain'd of the remnant of Giants, behold his Bedsted was a Bedsted of Iron: Is it not in *Rabbah of the Children of Ammon*? Nine Cubits was the length thereof, and four Cubits the breadth of it. Now some can scarce believe, that it was possible for *Moses* to speak thus of a Man that was lately dead, and overcome by the *Israelites*, and whose Bed was rather in *Basan*, of which Territory he was King, than among the *Ammonites* who were none of his Subjects. But *Moses* had a mind to give a particular account of a thing, which was well known at that time indeed, but would have been unknown to Posterity, unless he had deliver'd it in writing. As for what concerns the Bed, how it came to be carried into another Kingdom, who can tell? But since there is no Absurdity in this Story, nothing can be gather'd from a thing, the reason of which is altogether unknown.

17. In the same Chapter, v. 14. we meet with the following passage, *Jair the Son of Manasseh took all the Country of Argob unto the Coasts of Geshuri and Maacathi, and call'd them after his own name Bashan-Havoth-jair unto this day*. We shall handle this matter more at large in our Commentary. In the mean time if this were added by a later hand, yet it would not follow from

from thence, that the greatest part of the *Pentateuch* was not written by *Moses*.

18. We will not deny the last Chapter of *Deuteronomy* to be writ by some one else, where *Moses's* going up to Mount *Nebo*, and his death, are related, and yet all the foregoing Chapters are not therefore to be given away from him. We may easily suppose that this Book was supplied by another hand, which had been in a manner imperfect, if it had not ended with the death of *Moses*. But those Jews that are of opinion, that *Moses* foretold all these things, as being assisted by a Prophetical Spirit, do not deserve to be heard. What can be said more plainly, to make us understand that these things were written long after *Moses's* death, than what we find in the three last Verses?

IV. Hence we may gather from these eighteen places, which are commonly brought to prove the *Pentateuch* to be of a later date, that most of them are doubtful, and consequently ought not to be made use of as Arguments to prove these five Books to belong to another Age. Very few of them manifestly seem to be added by another hand, and do not in the least hinder, why we should not ascribe these Volumes to *Moses*. After the same manner, some ancient Grammarians tell us, there are several Verses here and there inserted into *Homer's* Poems, yet no one from thence takes occasion to deny that the *Iliads* and the *Odysses* were written by *Homer*. We must not imagine that in former Ages they

had

had such plenty of Books, or so many Copies of the same Book as now we have; and so it might easily happen, that in succeeding Times one of the Prophets might make some Additions to *Moses*, which afterwards were incorporated with all the Copies.

Indeed if it did not otherwise evidently appear, that the greatest part by far of the *Pentateuch* was written by *Moses*, I confess there would be great weight in the above-mention'd Objections, to incline us to believe that these Volumes were written much later than is commonly pretended; but since we have proved it beyond all manner of doubt, that almost all the *Pentateuch* belongs to *Moses*, we have no reason to ascribe those Books to any one but him.

V. It has been long controverted among Learned Men, who it was that made these Additions which we find in the Books of *Moses*; and they have gone upon various Conjectures. Some would have him to be *Joshua*, others *Esdra*, and lastly, others to be the under Scribe among the *Hebrews*; but this is only guessing, for they bring no Reasons to enforce their Opinions. Because *Joshua* succeeded *Moses*, therefore some People fancy it was he that inserted those Passages that seem to carry Discoveries of a later Age. Again, others ascribe this to *Esdra*, who is, by the Jews, said to have regulated the Sacred Volumes, and by some, to have made them up again out of his Memory after they were certainly lost. But since these different Hypotheses are supported

by no competent Witnesses, that is to say, such as flourished in the same Times, or such as might have learn'd the Truth out of the Memoirs of their Contemporaries, they may be as easily rejected, as they are brought upon the Stage. Nor is a multitude of Authors, who lived several Ages after, and never cite any that are older than themselves, and who do but transcribe one another, of any weight. *Esdra* is only called a *Scribe*, and a *ready Scribe in the Law of Moses*, in those Books that go under his Name. See chiefly the seventh Chapter of *Esdra*, and this seems to have given occasion to that Fable, of his restoring the Sacred Books; though *Teanwald*, rather signifies a Learned Man, as we might easily demonstrate, than one that is busied in transcribing of Books. Several uncertain things have been positively asserted concerning these *under Scribes*, as we shall shew at a more proper place upon the following Books, but this is the most uncertain of all, viz. That they inserted the above-mentioned Additions into the *Mosaical* Volumes.

And therefore after a diligent Examination of the Matter, we ingenuously own that here we do not know what to conclude; perhaps one of those who are already supposed, perhaps some one else, and perhaps several hands have at several times inserted these things into *Moses*. Therefore we can have no surer or safer Sanctuary here, than prudently to suspend our Judgements; by which conduct, if we do not discover the Truth, yet at least it is not excluded from the Mind.

VI. If

VI. If we were able to discover all the Designs that *Moses* proposed to himself in writing, this would be of much greater Importance towards the better Interpretation of his Volumes; for these Books are not like the Works of Mathematicians, where we find nothing but general Propositions, that have a relation neither to certain Places, nor Times, nor Men, and do not allude to any thing but the business in hand. *Moses* writ for the Benefit and Instruction of a particular People called the *Jews*, though I do not deny that by the means of Divine Providence, his Books were afterwards serviceable to innumerable other Nations. Upon this account he said abundance of things merely for the use of that People, which he had omitted, if he had not been influenced by this Consideration. He likewise had an Eye to the Opinions and Customs of the neighbouring Nations, which he assented to, or rejected, according as they agreed with Reason and the Truth.

We know indeed, from the nature of the thing it self, that the general aim of his writing, was to teach the *Israelites* the Worship of one God, and to deliver them the Laws which he had received from him; but it is to be wished, that we particularly knew for what Reasons he followed one certain Method in Writing more than another, and what he chiefly had an eye to in that Abridgement of the ancient History which he has left behind him. From hence perhaps we might be able to comprehend why he omits several

Transactions, to give us a Narration of some other Events, which are not, as we imagine, of so great Importance; why he used such and such Words and Expressions, why he mentions some things only *en passant*, and treats of others in a more copious and frequent manner; with other things of the same nature, which would give considerable light to many obscure places.

Were it possible for any one so to secure his Readers, before they were admitted to the perusal of *Moses*, that they should find no rugged places, or at least but few, that were hard to be understood; so universal an Obligation could never be requited with Thanks and Commendations enough. For Example, No one reads the short *Prologomena* which *Asconius Pedianus* has given us, before some of *Cicero's* Orations against *Verres*, but he would with all his heart be at any Expence, that all the rest of his Orations were recommended and illustrated by such Prefaces. For those Prefaces or Arguments are no small helps towards the understanding of *Tully*, and would be infinitely more serviceable to the World, if they were but longer.

Now since we are destitute of such Assistances, by reason of the shortness of *Moses's* History, and the great Scarcity of ancient Oriental Authors, and can by no means supply the Defect of those things which are necessary to such a Design, it remains that we must often be involv'd in the greatest Difficulties. And as I often considered of this Matter, when I had the *Mosaical* Writings in

my

my hands, so I was resolved to collect and gather out of *Moses* himself, whatever might be pertinently said upon this occasion. I flatter'd my self that I should not be so rigorously censur'd, if I did not answer the Reader's Expectation, as if I only rais'd his Appetite, and did not endeavour to satisfy him; for this reason I made no scruple to set what follows before my Commentary, whatever the Learned World may think of it.

VII. That nobody may mistake me, or expect to find what I never promised, I do not here inquire what was *Moses's*, or rather God's Intention in delivering the Law, which we shall consider when we come to the particular Laws, but what was *Moses's* chief and principal aim, in writing and publishing the *Pentateuch*, such as we now have it. All Men, as we observed before, know well enough that *Moses* chiefly writ to teach the People of the Jews, that only one God was to be worshipp'd, and after what manner that was to be done; but we must more distinctly shew, what method he took to reach that mark, (if I may be allow'd so to express my self) and what other ends he might possibly have.

I. We must chiefly, and in the first place remember, that it never was in *Moses's* thoughts to write the Annals of all Mankind down to his own time; but only to select those Passages out of the Histories of former Ages, which agreed with his general Design before mention'd, or some other particular by-ends. Hence we find

that nothing can be shorter than his History is, from the Creation of the World to *Abraham*, since 'tis dispatch'd in the first eleven Chapters, which make up about one fifth part of the Book of *Genesis*, and yet the History before *Abraham* includes above two thousand years, but from *Abraham* to the death of *Joseph* where the Book of *Genesis* ends, 'tis not quite three hundred years.

Nay, out of this General History of two thousand years and upwards, he only selects a few things, that were either necessary to the Series and Order of the following Transactions, or might serve to instruct the Minds of the *Israelites* in Piety and Vertue. And this is the reason why he omits an infinite number of things, which the Curiosity of the Reader would be apt to demand a detail of, and only presents us with a naked Chronology of the first Times. However he occasionally sprinkles some things, which he imagined might more easily induce the *Israelites* to observe the Law, and therefore not only tells them that the World was created, and that it was made in the compass of six days, but that God rested on the (7) Seventh, as we find expressly in *Gen. 2. 1, 2, 3.* (because this day was to be kept Holy, and 'twas chiefly celebrated in the Law in remembrance of the Creation) that the Jews might understand why they were so solemnly commanded to rest on that day. For the

TO (1) The Learned Master of the Charter-School to his Excellency his Highness, himself reach to the same purpose, as M. de G. does here in this Paragraph.

same reason, Chap. i. 14. *Moses*, where he mentions the several uses that are made of the Sun and Moon's motion, observes by the by that they shewed *Seasons* or solemn Festivals. When he might have contracted the History of the first Sin, as he does many more, and only said that our first Parents were not in all respects obedient to God, for which reason he inflicted upon them all those Evils that now visit Mankind; he chose perhaps to enlarge more copiously upon it in the third Chapter, because it might be useful for the *Israelites*, who were commanded to abstain from several Animals and Fruits, to know, that the first Sin proceeded from Incontinence; that in this Example might deter them from being seduced with the outward Appearance of any prohibited Flesh or Fruit.

2. *Moses's* Design was, to write the History of the Jewish Nation from its first Founder *Abraham*, who was commanded by God to go out of *Chaldea* into the Land of *Canaan*, where properly and in Truth the Original of the *Hebrews* is to be sought. For while *Abraham* was beyond the *Euphrates*, he liv'd among the other *Gentiles*, but in *Canaan*, living apart from all the rest, he did in some manner represent a particular Nation by his Family. This is the reason why *Moses*, from that time, omits all other Nations, and only speaks of *Abraham* and his Posterity, although no question is to be made, but that innumerable Events worthy of remembrance happened in other Kingdoms. As for instance, it had been

worthy the relating, what sort of a Priesthood that of *Melchisedech* was, and how he maintain'd the Worship of the High God among a People that were abandon'd to Idolatry. Nevertheless because these things related to the History of another Nation *Moses*, who still keeps to his purpose, omits them. From hence we may learn by the bye, that we must not always draw an Argument from his Silence, and that for instance, we cannot affirm that all other Nations were forsaken by God Almighty, merely because *Moses* says nothing of God's Favours to them.

He seems likewise to have design'd to reform the Manners of the *Israelites*, not only by direct and open Precepts, but by a more oblique way, of instructing them by Narrations. It was a common Custom with the *Israelites*, to cast off their Wives at pleasure, which by reason of the Hardness of their Hearts, he would not absolutely forbid, but hints to them, That it was not so from the beginning, and that whoever could receive this saying might.

Therefore, says he, a Man shall leave his Father and his Mother, and shall cleave to his Wife, and they twain shall be one Flesh. Chap. 2. 24. Compare our Saviour's words, *Matt. 19. 4. &c.* with these.

Polygamy too was in Fashion among them, which he could not openly attack, without

(4) Thus our Author supposes, that to dissuade the Jews from taking to themselves Wives out of a strange Nation, he let them see, how Fatal to the Sons of God their Marriages with the Daughters of *Canaan* proved, *Gen. 6. 1. 2.*

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alienating the Hearts of all the People from him. However in that compendious History of the *Antediluvian* Ages, especially where he mentions the Posterity of *Cain*, he judg'd it *à propos*, not to omit Chap. 4. that the first Instance of Polygamy was in that Generation, and privately insinuates, that *Lamech*, who first assum'd that Liberty, was of a fierce Disposition, and despised his other Wives, as appears by his History.

4. *Moses* endeavours, in this History, to raise an Aversion in the *Israelites* to the Fables of their Neighbours, and consequently to their Religion, which for the most part was built upon them; and this seems probable for the following Reasons: He not only teaches, that the World was created, which the neighbouring Nations seem to have believed, or rather knew it, from ancient Monuments; but he likewise shows how many Generations there were from the Beginning of the World down to his own time, and reckons every particular Person so generated, to oppose the Truth to that mighty number of Generations, which the *Egyptians* pretended to have been in their own Country. For not to mention what the Learned Sir *John Marsham* has collected relating to this Head, *Herodotus*, who liv'd about the middle of the Fourth Chiliad of the World, according to the Computation of the *Hebrews*, tells us in his Second Book, Chap. 142. that the *Egyptians* pretended, after the Gods had ceased to reign in *Egypt*, that there reach'd to his Age three hundred forty five Generations, which

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make up Ten thousand four hundred seventy three years. See the Boasting of the *Egyptians*, *Ezek.* 29. 3. and our Annotations upon *Numbers* 13. 23. But *Moses* shews, *Gen.* 10. 6. that after the Flood, *Egypt* was Peopled by the Posterity of *Cham*, who came thither out of *Babylon*. The *Egyptians* too Romanced very much concerning the Generation of Men in their Country, and about the Flood, which may be found in *Diodorus*, L. 1. They boasted that they were the (1) Inventors of all things, as the same Authors tell us; most of which *Moses* confutes by the bye, giving a quite different Account of things, and plainly shews that others were the Inventors of them. For Example, The *Egyptians* ascribed Agriculture, and the Invention of Squeezing Wine from the Grape to their *Osiris*, which belongs to *Noah*, as we are inform'd by *Moses*, Chap. 9. 20. The *Phœnicians* too had publish'd several Fictions, if *Philo Byblius's Sanchoniathon* has given us a true account of their Theology, a Fragment of which is to be seen in *Eusebius's Preparatio Evangelica*, l. 1. cap. 10. which *Moses* contradicts; as will soon appear by comparing the two Histories.

5. He seems likewise, by not only Writing his Law, but Publishing it, and commanding it to be

(1) So they ascribed the Invention of Music to one *Promethæus* a Son of *Zeus*, who, in *Diodorus* tells us, L. 1. taught the *Libyans* with three strings; but *Moses* gives it to *Jabal*. They likewise pretended, that under the Reign of *Osiris*, the Art of working in Brass and Iron was taught our in *Thebes*. See the same *Hieronymus*, l. 1.

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6. Most of the Oriental Nations not only boasted of their Antiquity, as *Diodorus Siculus* has observ'd in his first Book, but likewise extravagantly praised their Founders, and reckon'd them among their Gods, as after *Diodorus*, *Herodotus* in the place above-mention'd, and *Macarius* in *Eusebius's* *Prap. Evang.* l. 2. c. 1. and several others have remarked. Now *Moses* shews them to be descended of *Cham*, *Noah's* third Son, who was so far from Meriting a place among the Divinities, that he could not be esteem'd a Good Man. He likewise observes all under one, Chap. 9. 22. that the *Canaanites* were descended from that Race which God had curs'd. Nor did he forget, Chap. 19. 37, 38. to take notice that the *Ammonites* and the *Moabites* came from incestuous Parents. And as the *Edomites* might perhaps boast that they proceeded from the eldest Son, he exposes his Scandalous Selling of his Birth-right, Chap. 25. Nay, perhaps he had this in his Head, when he observes that the younger Children were often prefer'd to the elder, as we

(m) The Egyptian Priests had not only their Mysteries and Sacred Doctrines, which they did not hold it lawful to reveal to the People, but peculiar Lemens or Characters which none but themselves could read. Vld. Herod. l. 2. Diad. Biblioth. l. 2.

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have observ'd upon (*n*) Gen. 48. 19. therefore it is highly Credible, that *Moses* had a mind to mortify the Pride of the neighbouring Nations, and furnish the *Israelites* with some Topicks to upbraid them with.

(7) Lastly, While he writes the History of the *Hebrews*, although 'tis true he enlarges more copiously upon their Affairs, yet we must not believe (and the Brevity of it is a convincing Argument of what I here maintain,) that he never design'd to write full Annals. It appears from the Sacred History it self, that several things are omitted by him, which however are told in another place, though they had no relation to it. He says nothing of the Idolatry of the Ancestors of the *Israelites*, when they were beyond the Eu-

(8) 'Tis remarkable enough (says *M. le Clerc* upon this place) that *Moses* takes care all along in his History, wherein he omits innumerable Particulars of the greatest Consequence, to observe that several First-born Sons either forfeited their Birth-right, or were inferior to their younger Brothers in all good Qualities. Thus *Cain*, the First-born, was not so acceptable to God, as his Brother *Abel*, and at last lost the Privileges of Primogeniture, Gen. 4. *Shim* seems to be prefer'd to *Japhet*, Gen. 9. *Abraham* to *Haran*, Gen. 11. *Isaac* to *Ishmael*, Gen. 17. and *Yahab* is set before *Maiah*. Amongst the Sons of *Jacob*, *Ruben* loses his Birth-right, which was partly conferred upon *Judah*, and partly upon *Joseph*, and *Joseph's* younger Son is preferred to the Elder. If it were lawful for us to interpose our own Conjectures, continues he, we might with probability enough suppose that the *Moabites*, the *Ammonites*, *Ismaelites* and *Egyptians*, who were all descended from the eldest Sons, did upon that Score, claim a Right over the *Israelites*, where they happened to be more Powerful than them: For which reason *Moses*, who writ chiefly for the sake of the Jews, often took notice, that the elder Brothers were not without good cause, Position'd to the younger: Nay, *Moses* himself, who was the younger of the two, was prefer'd to his Brother *Aaron*, *Non sine aliquo fratre invidia*, Numb. 12.

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phrates, of which *Joshua* 24. 2. makes mention, unless perhaps it is obscurely hinted at in *Gen* 31. 53. He is utterly silent of the Idolatry of the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, which nevertheless *Ezekiel* the Prophet lays to their Charge, Chap. 20. 7, 8. He has likewise omitted a particular sort of Superstition, into which they fell when they were in the Wilderness, of which *Amos* 5. 25, 26. gives us an account. But for what reasons, we are wholly in the dark.

But since by these Examples, and indeed by the Work it self, 'tis evident that *Moses* did not write Annals, we must less admire to see him neglect the order of Time, which ought to be observ'd in a larger History. For 'tis well known, that in such sorts of Histories, as Lives are, the true Series of things is never accurately kept, as we find in the most celebrated Biographers of the *Greeks* and *Latins*, *Plutarch*, *Diogenes*, *Lactantius*, *Corn. Nepos* and *Suetonius*.

These seem to be the particular Designs of *Moses*, these his more secret Ends of Writing, besides that universal and manifest End, which the Reader finds at first sight, namely, of bringing the *Israelites* to the Worship of the only true God. They that remember these Hints, as they are reading of *Moses*, will discover several more things than we have here mention'd, as we have likewise taken notice of many things in our Commentary, which we did not think convenient to repeat here.

Dissertation IV.

Concerning the Temptation of Eve by the Serpent.

I. *How differently Interpreters have explained this History: Some affirm that it was a real Serpent. II. Others look upon the whole to be Allegorical; or, III. Pretend that the Devil was signified by that Name: Or, IV. That he informed the body of a Serpent. V. That the manner how Sin entered into the World cannot certainly be known. VI. Another Explication of this Passage. VII. Why the Serpent is called Subtle. VIII. The meaning of the word Naked. IX. Why a Punishment was inflicted upon the Serpent.*

SOME of the Ancient Jews are of Opinion, that the whole passage in *Moses* is to be understood of a real Serpent, which Creature they imagine to have formerly had the Gift of Speech, so that *Eve* might very well understand him. *Josephus* in the first Book of his *Antiquities*, c. 1. pretends, that at that time *Quadrupes locuti sunt hominibus*, all Creatures using the same Language, and consequently being indued with Reason and Under-

Understanding, the Serpent, incited by Envy, tempted Eve to Sin, and among other things received this signal Punishment, viz. That he should be deprived of his Feet, and ever after crawl upon the Ground. *Aben Ezra*, and several *Rabbins*, interpret this place after the same manner. To explain my self impartially, If *Moses* had been of this Opinion, he could not have spoken more plainly to the purpose, than now he does: For in the first place, he describes the Serpent to have been the most Subtle of all Creatures: Next, That he employ'd his Subtlety in Deceiving our First Parent, and held a Dialogue with her, as if he had been a Master of Reasoning. Lastly, That his creeping upon his Belly was imposed upon him as a Punishment. *Josephus* himself could not have more fully explained his Sentiments, than *Moses* has done.

II. But other Persons, who were Jews likewise, not being able to digest so many unpalatable things, as Speech and Reason attributed to a Beast, and the Serpent's losing his Feet, although *Moses* seem'd to express as much in the plainest manner imaginable, yet rather than understand him so, they chose to commit Violence upon his words, and betake themselves to Allegory. *Philo* indeed, in his Treatise *De mundi opificio*, and elsewhere, denies that these were *Fables and Fictions*, wherein the Poets and Sophists take so great a delight. Nevertheless he owns them to be *Figurative Documents*, that are to be explain'd Allegorically, in order to find out the hidden meaning of them.

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And lastly affirms, That it may be rightly conjectured, that the Serpent is a Symbol of Pleasure, which Argument he handles more copiously afterwards. *Maimonides* also Part 2. *Mor. Nev. c. 19.* supposes, that these Passages are to be expounded by way of Allegory, and some of the later *Rabins* declare themselves to be of the same Opinion.

III. But others that have a just Indignation to this Libertine way of Interpreting the Scripture, which wholly depends upon the Fancy of the Interpreter, and yet not able with *Josephus* to follow the literal Sense, have fallen into different Sentiments, none of which labours with fewer Inconveniencies than the two above-cited Opinions. Some Divines of no mean Rank in the Learned World, maintain, that it was not a Serpent, properly so called, which appeared, but that the Devil was signified by that name, that therefore the Devil is called the old Serpent by the *Hebrews*, and is thus described by *St. John* in the *Revelations* 12. 9. *The great Dragon the old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, who seduceth all the Earth.* See likewise *Rev. 20. 2.* For this Reason the Devil is called by our Blessed Saviour, *a Murderer from the Beginning.* And the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* 2. 24. tells us, *That Death entered into the World by the Envy of the Devil.* See also *2 Cor. 11. 3.* where the Serpent is said to have deceived the Woman by his Subtily. But this Hypothesis is easily refuted; for neither can the Devil be called the most subtle Beast of the Field, but in a

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Figurative Sense; neither will the Punishment inflicted upon the Serpent, suffer us to doubt, that a Serpent's Body at least appear'd here. To remove these Difficulties some conjecture, that the Devil did not put on a real Serpent, but only formed the Exterior Appearance of one. But the above-mention'd Objections are as directly level'd against this Opinion as the former.

IV. For this reason several Persons have believed, that the Devil used the Serpent's body as an Organ to act his Imposture by, and that God, to shew his utter Aversion and Hatred of Sin, punish'd the very Organ by which this Seduction was effected. But if it were so, what occasion was there to say, that the Serpent was the most subtle Beast of the Field. For the Devil might have abused the most stupid Creature in the World to this purpose with as much Success; for he did not employ the Serpent's Craft, but his own, to deceive Eve.

V. But others observing these and the like Difficulties in all these Opinions, came at last to this Point, as to own, that all we could apparently gather from this *Ænigma*, was, that the First Parents of Mankind began to Sin, from whence a Series of innumerable Evils were derived to them and their Posterity. 'Tis indeed certain, that now and heretofore Mankind has been in a State of great Corruption, nor can the beginning of this Infection be carried lower than the Original of the World. But then after what manner Sin entered into the World, so that we might under-

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stand plainly, and without the least Reasons of doubting, all the Circumstances of the first Sin, none but those can signifie to us, who were present at the matter, if by any means they could be revived again.

VI. Lastly, Others finding in this History, frequent mention made of Discourses, where none at all seem to have passed, imagine, that the Serpent did not speak, but that *Eve* saw him eating the Forbidden Fruit, and was seduced, by his Example, to eat of it her self. Especially if we consider that this prohibited Fruit, by its beauty, and perhaps by the specious name of *Knowledge*, might help to induce her, as she was gazing on it. Indeed the Serpent's Punishment, below v. 14. *Thou shalt lick the Dust all the days of thy Life*, seems to intimate, that the Serpent had deceived *Eve* by eating of the Fruit, and because he had occasioned her Ruine by eating of Fruit from a high Tree, therefore he was condemn'd to lick the Juices of the Earth. The Favourers of this Opinion do not deny, but that some Evil Spirit might act his part in this Tragedy, for which reason the *Jews* not rightly comprehending the meaning of this place, might in after-Ages call him by the name of the *Serpent*. But as the Sacred Historian introduces the Serpent Speaking, who had no Speech at all, according to the Genius of his Narration, as is plain from the first Chapter of *Genesis*, where he frequently represents God Almighty speaking to all the parts of the Creation; so likewise because he was to give him

him his share in a Dialogue, by whose Example our first Parents were deceived, he therefore attributes Subtlety to him, which however can be supposed to belong to a Beast, no more than the Faculty of Speaking does. For this reason he is said to have used both Speech and Craftiness, because, as the Maintainers of this Opinion alledge, he as effectually ruined our first Parents, as if he had seduced them by a crafty artificial Harangue. And therefore both the Subtlety of the Serpent, and his Conversation with *Eve*, are considered by them, not as Circumstances that can be urged, but as some Oriental Ornaments of the History. This was in part the Opinion of *Isaac Abarbanel*, who denies that the Serpent could maintain any Discourses with *Eve*, and asserts, That nothing more is meant by this Colloquy, but the Reasonings of the Woman from what she gathered from the Serpent's action, and his eating of that Tree. He pretends, that she infer'd from the Serpent's Example, that the Forbidden Fruit was Wholesome and Nutritive, which Opinion does not well agree with the words, *You shall be like Gods*; the meaning of which could never be deduced from this single action of the Serpent.

In so perplex'd and obscure a Matter as this is, 'tis the safest way, as I imagine, openly to confess our Ignorance, provided we still preserve the Substance of the History, as 'tis explain'd in the fifth Opinion, but so as not to condemn those that differ from our Sentiments. We are now

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at liberty to examine more at large the most remarkable Particulars of this Relation.

VII. We find in the Sacred Writer, that the Serpent was the most Subtle of the Beasts of the Field. Now some are apt to believe, that *Moses* in this Passage had a Respect to the Craft of the Devil, who either appeared himself, or actually entered into the Body of the Serpent. But what wonder is it, that the Devil should be more cunning than a Beast? And Secondly, How comes he to be reckoned among the Beasts of the Field? Therefore others conjecture, That the Craftiness of Serpents properly so called is here meant, and to this purpose observe, That as they lie hid in the Dust or under the Herbs, they use to bite the heels of the Animals that pass by: For which reason *Aristotle Hist. Animal.* l. 1. c. 1. ranks them among the insidious and wily Creatures, and therefore *Moses* going about to relate the Fall of our first Parents, which was occasioned by the Serpent, after what manner soever it happened, very pertinently observes, that the Serpent is an insidious Animal, and indeed we find the Hebrew word, *1 Sam.* 23. 22. applied to Men lying in wait, and starting out of Holes. Otherwise, as for what regards Subtlety considered in general, there are several other Animals more cunning than a Serpent, among which *Aristotle* reckons Foxes, *περὶ τῶν θηρίων* 4. 1. Others are cunning and mischievous as Foxes.

Those that hold this Narration to be wholly Figurative, pretend that *Moses* prudently makes mention

mention of the insidious nature of the Serpent, to prepare his Reader for what he was going to tell him, of the Fall of our first Parents. Thus the most ancient Philosophers, both *Africans* and *Greeks*, who used to deal in Apologues borrow'd from Brutes, if they are to speak concerning Craft, were wont to introduce a *Fox*, and to mention him in the beginning, as the most Cunning of Beasts, or else gave some by him of his Sublety. Thus we find in *Phaedrus*, that,

Dolosa vulpes avidis rapuit dentibus.

The Crafty Fox with greedy Teeth devour'd.

The same Creature is described by *Aelian*, as capable of acute Discourse, and is call'd by him *Arguta*, in his Fable of the *Fox and the Leopard*. But as no one of tolerable Sense, will infer from this, that the Fox is fitter to hold those Politick Discourses than any other Creature, so they say we lie under no Obligation to ascribe that Opinion to *Moses*, which *Josephus* erroneously attributes to him; viz. of assigning both Voice and Reason to Brutes.

VIII. Immediately upon eating the Forbidden Fruit, the Sacred Historian tells us, That our first Parents *knew themselves to be naked*, that is, They were sensible they had transgressed. Thus in *Exodus* 32. 29. after the Golden Calf was consecrated, *Moses* is said to have seen the People *naked*; and in the New Testament, *Tolomee* is sometimes taken for a Sinner, see *Rev.* 16. 15.

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Those that interpret *naked* in its proper Sense, involve themselves in insuperable Difficulties. When *Adam* and *Eve* were alone, they could no more be ashamed of their Nakedness, or discover it if they knew nothing of it before, than when they were in the State of Innocence. But say others, The Fruit of this Forbidden Tree, provoked them to Lust, and some indecent Motions of Body, which suppose to be true, (although 'tis a Conjecture without any manner of Foundation,) what will they be able to gather from hence? Can a Man's Appetite towards his Wife be said to be Vicious, which Nature it self has implanted upon all Creatures, or could they be more ashamed, because being naked, they felt this Appetite after their Transgression, more than they did before? When only they two inhabited the Universe, their Bed under the bare Canopy of the Heavens was equally as Chaste, as if it had been covered with a Roof, and Wall, and Casing, and Tapestry. 'Tis certain they could never be ashamed of that thing for which they were created, no less than other Animals; neither are we at this day ashamed of it, but before Witnesses, for certain Inconveniencies, which would arise from thence, though it is not so convenient to mention them in this place. I know what several of the Ancients, as well as Moderns, have said upon this occasion, but they are such groundless precarious things, that I will not stay to confute them.

IX. We are now arrived to the last part of our Disquisition, viz. The Punishment inflicted upon the Serpent, which we shall examine in as small a compass as may be. Those that affirm the Devil tempted *Eve* out of the Serpent's Mouth, do not at all wonder that God Almighty here is said to speak to the Serpent, that is, to the Devil. But others that deny the Serpent to have ever talked to *Eve*, are of opinion, that God's words here directed to the Serpent, were not for its own sake, which as being destitute of reason it could not understand, but for the Comfort of *Adam* and *Eve*. However both are agreed in this, That God might punish the Instrument by which Mankind was seduced, to express his just Hatred of Sin; as we find a like instance in *Exodus 21.28.* where an Oxe that had goared a Man or a Woman; so that they died, was commanded to be stoned, and his Flesh not to be eaten. One part of the Malediction is, That he should crawl upon his Belly, concerning which, there are two different Opinions. Some, in which number we find *Josephus* and several of the Modern *Jews*, believe, that God deprived the Serpent of his Feet, and commanded him to creep upon the Dust; and indeed if *Moses* had this in his Thoughts, he could not have express'd himself more plainly concerning it. But others believe it very improbable, that God should make any Alteration in the Nature of a Serpent, merely for the Transgression of Man, and therefore pretend, that what was natural to him, turned to

his Punishment, as Nakedness in a Man, and the Pains of Child-birth in a Woman. Indeed if Serpents had Feet at any time, they must of necessity have more than four, by reason of the prodigious length of their Body. But still 'tis difficult to comprehend, how a thing which was merely natural, and accompanied with no Pain, should be turned into a Punishment. As 'tis no Punishment for four-footed Creatures that they cannot fly, no more is it to those Reptiles that are destitute of Feet, to crawl upon their Bellies. Let the Reader examine which side has the fewest Difficulties, and chuse either this or that Opinion as he sees fit.

Dissertation V.

Concerning the Flood.

I. *The different Opinions about the Flood.* II. *Some hold it to be Universal, and endeavour to prove it from the express words of Moses.* III. *Others make it particular: The Arguments alledged by them.* IV. *Their Answers to the Reasons commonly urged by the Maintainers of the first Opinion.*

I. **A**LL Interpreters are agreed, That the Deluge was so far Universal, as it over-whelm'd all the then inhabited part of the World;

World; and that all the Race of Mankind, except *Noah's* Family, were destroy'd by it. But some are of opinion, that the whole Globe of the Earth was cover'd with Water, which others again as positively deny:

II. They that hold the Affirmative, in the first place, ground themselves upon the exprefs words of *Moses*, who introduces God laying his Commands upon *Noah*, Chap. 6. 19. *of every living thing of all flesh*, to take two of every sort into the Ark, to preserve the several Species of them, lest they should be lost. Which Command *Noah* accordingly obey'd, and taking Pairs of every Bird, every Beast, and every creeping thing upon the Earth, according to their several Kinds, placed them in the Ark. Now these Expressions denote, that all living Creatures whatever were to be destroy'd, for otherwise *Noah* might have recruited himself much easier out of some other Country where the Deluge did not reach, and consequently where they were not destroy'd, than have kept them in the Ark, which was infinitely more troublesome. As for the Birds especially, there was no necessity to gather them, because as they could have easily flown to the dry places, so after the Country that was overflow'd was dry again, they would have soon returned. Nay, it had been much more commodious for *Noah* to have gone to that part of the World which was not cover'd with Waters, than to be shut up so long in the Ark.

Secondly,

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Secondly, As the Species of all Animals are said to be preserved by *Noah's* Care, so *Moses* could not in more expreis words have told us, that all the rest over the face of the World were destroy'd, than in the following Lines, Chap. 7. 21.

All the flesh died that moved upon the Earth, both of Fowl and of Cattle, and of Beast, and of every creeping thing, &c. All in whose nostrils was the Breath of Life, of all that was on the dry Land died. And every living Substance was destroyed, which was upon the face of the ground, both Man and Cattle, and the creeping things, and the Fowl of the Heaven. If a Man was never so much minded to tell his Reader, that all sorts of Creatures in all places were destroy'd, 'tis impossible to do it more plainly. How can the Birds of any one Country be supposed to be lost, if they had the next Country to fly to, which was free from the Flood. Could* not so much as one wild Beast save himself thither by flight?

Thirdly, We are told in the eighth Chapter, that *Noah* staid within the Ark till such time as the Earth was dried, when it had been much more easie for him to have gone to some of those Countries which had not been visited by the Deluge; especially, since the Soil of such a place would have been much better for him upon all accounts, than that of a Country corrupted by the Salt Water. Nay, he might, as we observ'd before, have fled thither before the Flood, with his Family and all his Effects, and so have avoided the Fatigue and Trouble of building

an Ark, which employ'd him without question a whole year.

Fourthly, The height of the Water shews, that the whole Terrestrial Globe was covered; for since *the biggest Mountains under Heaven* were covered fifteen Cubits, that is, two and twenty Foot high with Water, 'tis certain that no part of the Earth could escape the Flood; and so we find, that when the Waters began to decrease, the first place the Ark lighted upon, was on the highest ridge of the *Gordian Mountains*.

To these Reasons, which are borrowed from *Moses's* Narration, we will not add the general Consent of ancient and modern Interpreters, because all of them purely depend upon it. Now those that are of Opinion that it was no otherwise Universal, than as it overflow'd so much of the World as was inhabited by Mankind, and destroy'd all Men but those that escaped in the Ark, think they have defended their Hypothesis with invincible Arguments, and in the next place have produced Answers to all the above-mentioned Reasons, which, to say the Truth, do not equal the Force of Arguments. After the same manner, those that maintain that all the World was covered with the Flood, prove their Opinion out of Scripture, much better than they resolve the Objections of their Adversaries.

III. That only the inhabited part of the World suffer'd by the Flood, they think is manifest from hence. That since God Almighty only propos'd to destroy Mankind, there was no necessity for
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the Flood to reach farther than Men had planted themselves. It is likewise past Dispute, that he design'd to punish Men alone, because Men alone are capable of Sin, in whose Destruction, if any Beasts are involved, they perished for no other reason, but because they happened to be in the same place where Men lived. Now before the Flood Mankind could not extend it self far, and perhaps had not exceeded those Countries which lie about the *Tigris* and *Euphrates*. 'Tis a foolish thing, says *Isaac Vossius*, in his Dissertation *de Aetate Mund.* p. 283. to imagine, that Mankind was so much multiplied before the Flood, as to inhabit all the corners of the Earth. How slow Humane Nature was in producing Men at that time, we may easily gather from this, That *Noah* was but the ninth from *Adam*. Whoever computes the Matter fairly will see, that from those eight Persons who escaped the Flood, till the time of the Dispersion of the Nations, more Men might be born, than from *Adam* alone in the space of two thousand years. Nevertheless 'tis certain, that before the Confusion of *Babel*, Mankind possessed but a small part of *Asia*. Therefore those Persons are very much mistaken, who suppose, that in *Noah's* time the whole World was inhabited, when perhaps only *Syria* and *Mesopotamia* were planted. Now no reason obliges us to extend the Inundation beyond the Bounds of the inhabited World: Nay, on the other hand 'tis absurd to say, That the Effects of the Punishment which was inflicted upon Mankind,

kind, should be exerted where no Men were to be found.

Secondly, If we consider how prodigious the height of the Waters must be, to cover all the highest Mountains in the World, there is not Water enough either in the Sea, or Clouds, to rise so high: If there are no Mountains whose tops are above three Miles high, for which consult *Isaac Vossius* in *Pomp. Melam.* l. 5. c. 2. and *Varenius's Geogr. Gen.* l. 1. c. 10. yet the Water must have risen so high. But 'tis evident, that neither the Sea-water, nor that in Fountains and Rivers, nor Showers, were sufficient to effect it. The Water which is contain'd within the Earth, could never be carried so high, unless the Earth sunk in, and the Mountains were levell'd; which contradicts the *Mosaical* History, and though the Water of the Clouds were joyn'd to it, yet 'tis impossible it should ascend so high, since we see 'tis made up of Vapors exhaled from the Waters below; for the collected Water of the Clouds, must have made a much greater Mass, than the Globe of the Earth, if it could so far overflow it, as to exceed the highest Mountains twenty Foot at least, which may be proved, by considering the greatness of the watry Circles which must encompass the Earth; and the farther they are removed from the Center of it, must needs be so much the greater. Some Persons, to clear themselves from these Difficulties, in the first place pretend, that the Air was condens'd in its lowest parts, and in the Caverns of the Earth.

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or at least something else served instead of Water: And lastly, That even the Air condensed into Water, fell down with the Rain. But all these are mere Conjectures, of which *Moses* mentions not the least Syllable; besides they must needs confess, that they add Miracle to Miracle, merely to overflow those Countries where there is no reason why a Deluge should be sent. If we should suppose the whole circumambient Air, saith the above-mentioned *Vossius*, in *Epist. ad And. Col. p. 385.* to be turned into Water, yet we shall never make the Mass of Waters rise one and thirty Foot and a half higher than the Superficies of the Earth. My reason is, Because Water will never be made to rise higher, either by Pumps, or any other attractive Power: For the Air that presses without, and forces the Water into the Tub or Pump, makes an exact *equilibrium* with the Water which is included in the Tub. Therefore according to the weight of the Water inclosed in the Tub, is the weight of that Cylinder of Air which presses the Water without; so that if the whole body of Air were condensed, and turned into Water, yet the Superficies of the Waters would not be above thirty two Foot high. To this we may add, That to turn this Air into Water, it must be so much condensed, that a certain quantity of it must equal the like quantity of Water in weight. But to effect this, the Air must be at least eight hundred times thicker than it is; for it appears by undoubted Experiments,

ments, that the exact weight of this lower Air which we breath, and which without question is the heaviest, is eight hundred times heavier at least than that of Water. See, *Edm. Halley's* second Dissertation in the Transactions of the Royal Society. T. XVI. p. 104.

Others that cannot digest this Condensation of the Air, are of opinion that the Rain and Sea-water was rarefied. However if we should admit so great a Rarefaction of Water, they are *Vossius's* own words, yet to make the quantity of it no more than fifteen times greater than usual, which is the least we can suppose, it ought properly to be called a Mist and not Water, wherein as neither Men nor the other Terrestrial Creatures could have been destroyed, so the Fishes could not have lived in it. Besides, had *Noah's* Ark been made of the lightest Cork imaginable, yet so light and thin a body could never have supported it.

If any one should still insist, that the Waters were created out of nothing, and annihilated again after all Living Creatures were destroyed, it may be said in the first place, That there is nothing to countenance this Conjecture to be found in *Moses*, who on the other hand expressly tells us, That the Waters of the Abyss and the Heavens were sent upon the Earth: And in the next place it ought to be consider'd, Whether 'tis suitable for the Divine Wisdom to create a mighty Mass of Water, to overflow those places where there were nothing but Beasts, and afterwards

wards to annihilate them. Lastly, It appears from the eighth Chapter, That the Waters were diminish'd by the Wind, and not by any extraordinary Effect of the Divine Omnipotence.

From hence a third Argument is deduced, whereby they endeavour to prove, that the Deluge was only particular. God, says *Moses*, Ch. 8. 1. sent a Wind, and the Waters abated. The only thing the Wind could do was; That a few more Vapours should be exhaled, or that the Water should more swiftly be carried into some certain place, into which of its own accord it would not run soon enough; but it could never exhaust the Ocean. Who can therefore believe, that the whole Earth, cover'd with Waters to so prodigious a height, could be dried up by the Wind? 'Tis certain this could no more be effected by the Wind, than in the Beginning of all things, the Sea could be compell'd into its *Alveus* by it; especially if we consider, that the Sun perpetually draws up Vapours from the Earth, even without the Wind; which Vapours being in too great Plenty in the Air, fall down back again upon the Earth in Showers. Besides, if the Wind could draw up so vast a quantity of Water in Vapours, it would follow, That there would be always much more Water in the Clouds than in the Ocean, since if they were all pour'd down, they could cover the whole Earth, not the highest Mountains excepted. But we have already shewn that this cannot be done.

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Fourthly, If the Sea-waters were spread all over the Face of the Earth, the Trees and smaller Plants could scarce have been preserv'd from Destruction; and if all Trees in all Countries had been spoil'd by the Saltness of the Water, how came they to be propagated again, since God is no where said to have created them a-new. Now no one will be so Obstinate as to deny, that in the compass of a year, or somewhat less, both Plants and Seeds will be corrupted in Salt-water: And those that are skill'd in Natural Philosophy will scarce affirm, that they would grow again, out of putrified Mud fermented by the Sun, as was formerly believed. 'Tis true, the force of this Argument is somewhat abated, if the Patrons of the Universal Deluge answer as they use to do, that the Saltness of the Sea was very much taken off by so great a quantity of fresh Water mingled with it. However 'tis hard to imagine, how several Plants could continue so long a space even under fresh Water, without being kill'd.

Fifthly, If all the Animals of all Countries in the World came to *Noah* in general, as 'tis plain they must needs come, suppose both Hemispheres were covered with Water, It may be enquired into, how so many Animals, which are peculiar to *America*, could come from that Continent to *Mesopotamia*? If *America* is any where joyn'd to our part of the World, it must be far Northwards under a cold Climate, which Beasts that are proper to the Torrid Zone, cannot endure.

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Nay, if we suppose it to be joyn'd to our Climate under a more favourable Latitude, how could the *American* Beasts, but the Serpents more especially, possibly get over so many Rivers, and Lakes, and Mountains, and find their way through so many Woods in so long a Journey? By what means, says *Isaac Vossius*, p. 398. could that Animal, for instance, which from the slowness of its Motion, is called the *Lazy*, arrive to *Noah's Ark*, and travel so many Miles, which after its own natural Pace, it could not perform in the space of Twenty thousand years.

Let the Patrons of an Universal Deluge likewise inform us, after what manner (*Id.* p. 186.) these Animals, leaving *Noah's Ark* and the ancient World, found their way into *America*, and Lands that are disjoyned by a vast Ocean. Another Absurdity too would follow, which is this, that such innumerable sorts of Creatures, which were unknown to our World both formerly and now, should pass through such mighty Tracts of Ground, and not leave any remainders of their several Kinds in their former Habitations.

Sixthly, The very building of the Ark presents us with no less Difficulties, if it were true, what the generality of Mankind believes, *viz.* That it was a common Receiptacle of all Beasts, and that we cannot name one Animal, whose Posterity did not come out of this Mansion. If we only compute those Creatures which are frequently found in the old World, yet the room which the Scriptures allow for this Ark, could

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not contain so many different Species, and the Food, that was necessary to maintain them so long. But if we take in the Beasts of the New World, and the Southern Hemisphere, there will not be room enough for the Animals themselves, much less for the vast Provisions to keep them alive there. Besides, a Man cannot easily comprehend, how these Animals, after what manner so ever they were distributed into their Cells, and their several Apartments kept clean, could live so long in this close Confinement. The Question too may be put, whether they generated in the Ark, which, if any one denies, is very strange, that these Brutes, which if you except a few of them, are not for Copulation once a year at least, should abstain from it; and if it assum'd then, as their Off-spring increased, there must be of course a greater Consumption of their Provisions. Several Persons here have recourse to Miracles, which as they might happen, so we need not suppose them without urgent necessity. But what necessity is there, that Countries destitute of Men, and the Animals of those Countries, should be overflow'd?

Seventhly. To lessen this Difficulty, perhaps it may be objected, That no more Creatures were created in every Species than in that of Man. But the above mention'd Learned Man thus confutes them. God, says he, from the Creation, fill'd the whole World, according to the respective Faculty of every Country and Sea, with all sorts of Beasts, Fishes and Trees. But Man

stone is said to be created by himself. Now it would be monstrously absurd to imagine, That only two Animals of every Species, and that only in one place, were formed by God Almighty. For if we are of that Opinion, what will become of those Plants and Animals which only breed in peculiar Continents, and which, for the above-mention'd reason, could not be transferr'd, and propagated from our World to theirs?

IV. These are the Arguments which have been urged to prove, That only the inhabited part of the Earth, and its Animals, suffer'd in the Deluge. But because the Maintainers of the contrary Opinion object, That when God speaks, all Humane Reasoning ought to cease: True it is, say the Patrons of a Particular Flood, and so it ought, if the Divine Words would only admit of an Interpretation. And thus the most Reverend Bishop of *Warcester*, Dr. *Stillingsfleet*, in the third Book and fourth Chapter of his *Origines Sacre*, where he treats of this Subject with that Learning and Judgment which is so peculiar to him, owns, that it cannot be proved by any necessary Arguments drawn from the Scriptures, that the whole Superficies of the Earth was overflow'd. We are at leisure now to examine the Answers they bring to the above-cited Reasons.

First, Though *All* Creatures are said to be admitted into the Ark, yet they observe that the word *All* is of doubtful Signification, and is very seldom taken absolutely, but in most places is restrained to the Subject then in hand. Even in

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the Writings of *Moses* himself, where he tells us, That a Famine prevail'd in *All the Earth*; our Divines own, that 'tis to be understood only of a particular part of the World. Thus *Vossius*, nay, other Writers, when they speak of a considerable number of Animals, express themselves after the same manner. *Livy*, speaking of the *Circensian* Spectacles as they were exhibited in his Age, has the following words, Lib. 44 c. 9. It was the Fashion then, even before our Modern Vanity was introduced, of filling the *Circus* with the Beasts of *ALL NATIONS*, to divert the People with several sorts of Spectacles. Here a few Nations, that were either Neighbours, or Subjects of the *Roman* People, are called *Omnes Gentes*. In like manner several Birds and Beasts in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Ch. 31. 6. where the King of *Egypt* is described under the Representation of a Tree, are called *All*. In the Leaves of it *All* the Birds of the Air built their Nests, under its Boughs *All* the Beasts of the Field did Copulate, and under its Shade did dwell *All Nations*. See *Daniel* 4. 18. so likewise *Hosea* 4. 3. where the great Devastation of *Judea* is described: Therefore, says the Prophet, the Earth shall Mourn, and *All* dwelling therein, among the Beasts of the Field, and the Birds of the Air, they shall fall Sick, yea, the Fishes of the Sea shall be destroy'd. Therefore *All* Animals, Clean and Unclean, that were let into the Ark, are to be understood only of those which that Country produc'd, where the first Seat of Mankind was, viz. That Fruitful

Territory about the *Tigris* and *Euphrates*: And perhaps the *All* here does not comprehend those of *All* Kinds, but only *All* those which are useful to Man. Of which Nature are the Cattel they feed upon, as Oxen, Sheep, &c. Horses, Asses, Camels, which were there imploy'd in carrying of Burdens, but therefore call'd *Unclean*, because they were not used for Food. Of Birds there might be Cocks, Geese, Ducks, Pigeons, Ravens, &c. Nor is it strange that *Noah* was commanded to preserve these Animals, which could not be had out of the neighbouring Countries, nor tamed without a long and tedious Trouble.

As for what relates to *Noah*, the Reasons why he was not ordered to fly to the adjoining Country where the Deluge did not reach, were, because other People should not follow him thither. Besides, it was convenient, that the Ark wherein he was to be preserved from the Deluge, should be built before those very Persons to whom he foretold it, that so they might be convinc'd he spoke to them in earnest. God Almighty, as *Hossius* conjectures, thought that his Justice was not to be exerted but in a convenient place. Now what more convenient place can be imagin'd than this, where the Guilty were to be punish'd in *Noah's* sight, and he that was Innocent, should be saved in the midst of Sinners?

Secondly, Where it is said, That *all living Creatures* were destroy'd, the place must be understood only of those Animals that were within the Limits of the overflow'd Countries: Which

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is not only the answer of *Possius*, but of *Dr. Stillingfleet*. Nay, from what has already been said, concerning the word *All*, we may gather, That 'tis not inconsistent with the *Mosaic* Narration, to suppose, that not all, but many Animals, and especially such as were in a more particular manner serviceable to Mankind, were destroy'd.

Thirdly, *Noah* carried in the Ark till the Waters were dried up, because it would be more convenient for him to set footing in a Country which he was formerly acquainted with, and which was free from Wild Beasts, than in an unknown place, full of Savage Creatures. No doubt on't, but the Soil was sufficiently damag'd by the Stagnation of the Water; but *Mesopotamia*, and the adjoyning Countries, being watered by vast noble Rivers, received less Detriment from the Salt Water, than others that were destitute of fresh Streams; so that 'tis reasonable to believe, they recover'd their former Fertility in a short space.

Fourthly, The highest Mountains that were covered to so vast a height by the Flood, were those which were situate in these Countries, beyond which Mankind was not at that time propagated. Nor does that Addition, *Under Heavens*, oblige us to believe the contrary, since it is sometimes used of a few neighbouring Countries, as *Deut. 2. 25*. On that day will I begin to send the Fear and Terror of thee, through the People under all the Heavens, *Sub omni Cælo*.

Having thus consider'd what might be said in behalf of this Opinion against the former, it now remains to be enquir'd how far, according to this Hypothesis, the Deluge might extend. But since we do not know what Countries were then inhabited, What Man dares presume to define the Bounds of the Flood? Perhaps that Tract of Ground which lies between the four Seas, the *Persian*, the *Caspian*, the *Euxine*, and the *Syrian*; in which compass we find the *Tigris*, the *Euphrates*, and several other vast Rivers, were by the Eruption of all Waters, and by the Clouds, gathered from all parts of the World by the Divine Power, and there condens'd into Moisture, buried and overflow'd. 'Tis true, this could not be effected without a Miracle; but then there is no way to solve the Difficulties of so great a *Cataclysm* without a Miracle. However the less and fewer of this Kind we suppose, provided the rest may be conveniently explain'd, that Exposition uses to be accounted the most agreeable to Truth by all Interpreters, because God is never so prodigal of Miracles, as to have recourse to them where Natural Causes are sufficient; much less does he violate and overturn all the establish'd Laws of Nature without good reason. In this very History we find, that God was pleas'd to give *Noah* notice when it was time for him to go into the Ark, because he could scarce know it of himself, but he does not tell him the time when he was to go out of it, but left the Matter wholly to his own Discretion, because

because he might very well know it without the Divine Assistance. He might, if it had so pleased him, have preserved all the Animals in the Ark alive without any Aliment, which had made the Ark considerably lighter, and had saved Noah a great deal of trouble; and yet we see he did not do it, because these Creatures might be supplied with Food by Humane Diligence. Where the Industry of Man ceases, there the Divine Help begins; and *Vice versa*.

Thus the Favourers of a Particular Deluge support their Opinion, but it has been objected against them, That if this Supposition were true, the Superficies of the Water could not have been perfectly Spherical, and consequently that the Ark in this great Declivity, must necessarily incline to the lower places. But as *Vossius* has very well answered, that which happens in lesser Inundations, the same might fall out in this great, and more than Natural Deluge. For the same Power which drove the Seas and Clouds to that Tract of Earth which was to be destroy'd, did likewise sustain the Ark, and the Declivity of the Water, as long as there was occasion for it.

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Dissertation VI.

Concerning the Confusion of Languages.

- I. *What is meant by* The whole Earth was of one Lip. II. *And* Let us make our selves a Name. III. *Who are denoted by the* Children of Men. IV. *This passage, Let us go down, examined.* V. *The different Opinions how the Confusion was effected.* VI. *That the Design of Babel might be Foolish, but was not Impious: Some Conjectures why God thought fit to blast it.*

I. **B**EFORE this wonderful Confusion happened at *Babel*, the Sacred Historian expressly tells us, *Gen. 11. 1.* That *the whole Earth was of one Lip, and of the same words; or as we have translated it, of one Language, and of one Speech;* because 'tis evident that the word *Lip*, both here and in several other places, signifies *Speech*; and the reason of it is, Because the Lips are no less serviceable to us in speaking, than the Tongue it self, see *Isaiah 19. 18.* No one doubts, but that one Universal Language was spoken by all Mankind at this time; but whether *Moses* has here a regard to that *ὁμοφωνία*, is not so plain. Perhaps these words may signifie, that Men lived
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in a State of Peace and Concord, because 'tis equally necessary towards the Building of any City, that Men should agree in their Sentiments and Inclinations, as well as in their Language: Nor does the Idiom of the Hebrew Language reject this Interpretation. Thus for instance to denote the unanimous Agreement of the *Canaanites* to beat back the *Israelites* by main force, *They gathered themselves together* (says the Sacred History *Joshua 9. 2.*) *to fight with Joshua, and with Israel with one mouth.* Thus likewise the False Prophets agreeing together in their Predictions, *declared good unto the King with one mouth,* 1 Kings 22. 13. Hence it is, that *to speak with the Lip of another*, is the same thing as to agree, as appears by the above-cited place of *Isaiah*, *In that day shall five Cities in the Land of Egypt speak the lip of Canaan, and Swear to the Lord of Hosts;* that is to say, They shall be of the same Opinion with the *Hebrews* that inhabit the Land of *Canaan*. And indeed the words *Unum Labium, & una Verba*, seem rather to signify Agreement of Mind than of Language, although 'tis certain there was but one Language then in the World. For by *eadem* or *una verba* we are not here to understand the same Sounds, and the same Syllables, but *voces consentientes* Unity of Mind. *Solomon Jarchi* expounds it the same design.

II. Learned Men have rightly enough observed, that in Scripture *to make ones self a Name*, is all one as to *get ones self a Fame or Reputation,*

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tion, in which sence this Expression is to be found, 2 Sam. 8. 13. *Isaiah* 63. 12. *Jer* 32. 20. & *Dan* 9. 15. and so this Tower might be said to be built *in women*, i. e. to spread the Fame of the Builders all over the World, which Phrase is to be met with 1 *Chron*. 22. 5. where mention is made of the Building of the Temple of *Jerusalem*. But this cannot possibly be the meaning of this place, for what an odd sort of a Conclusion would this be; Let us acquire our selves a Reputation, lest we be dispersed all over the Earth? Besides with whom would all Mankind which was concerned in the Building of this City, have gotten Glory and Fame? With their Posterity, as some will be apt to say, but then what fine Sence would this make, Let us make our selves Famous with Posterity, lest we be scattered into several Countries? If we carefully examine these words, and revolve the whole History in our Mind, we shall find the meaning of the place to be to this or the like purpose. Let us build us a City that may be the Metropolis of all the World, in which let there be one Government, the Seat of which Empire shall be perpetually in that City, lest Mankind be scattered all over the World, according to the Fancy of every rambling Family. If this Interpretation be admitted, it will follow, that *to make us a Name*, at least in this place, signifies in a manner the same as *to leave our name somewhere*, i. e. to make a place Famous with our Habitation, so that it derives its name from the Inhabitant, see
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1 Kings 9. 3. & 14. 21. Perhaps a *Name* here denotes a Monument which is called by the Name of the Person that erected it. Thus *Absalom* in his Life time had reared up for himself a Pillar, which is in the King's Dale, for he said, I have no Son to keep my Name in remembrance, and he called the Pillar after his own Name, and it is called unto this day *Absalom's* place, 2 Sam. 18. 18. So *Cain* not long after the Creation of the World built a City, which he called after the Name of his Son, Gen. 4. 17. In like manner Men were now resolved to build a City, which perhaps they would have called *Αἰθραπόλις*, or by some such sort of a Name. But if instead of the Hebrew word *שֶׁם* *Schem*, a Name, we changed one Letter and read it *עִם* *em*, that is to say, a Metropolis, the same Sense would arise; nor could it be pretended that this Expression is incongruous, *Let us build us a City and Tower, and make us a Metropolis, lest we be dispersed through all the Earth.* And therefore the Intention of Mankind perhaps, might be to build a Mother-City or Metropolis, in the Vale of *Sbinaar*, to which the Cities around it should be subject. Thus upon the building of this Metropolis, there would have been but one Empire in the World, which perhaps was design'd at first with no ill Intention, but because this Project drew several great Inconveniencies along with it, as we shall hereafter observe, God was pleased to blast and disappoint it.

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III. *By the Children of Men*, Bochart. Phal. l. i. c. 10. with several others, would understand the Unfaithful only, because the Daughters of Men, Gen. 6. 2. signifies the Female Descendants of Cain, distinguished from those of Seth, and thinks it by no means probable, that Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, Salub and Eleber were concern'd in the building of so vain and daring a Structure. But in the first place 'tis evident enough, that all Mankind, consisting of the Faithful as well as the Unfaithful, are generally meant by the Children of Men. Secondly, It is manifest that this Phrase is here to be taken in that Sence, from the first Verse of this Chapter, where they are called *the whole Earth*, as well as from the Silence of Moses. Thirdly, The Posterity of three Women, and that within the compass of an Age, were not sufficient to have laid the Foundation of an indifferent City, much less can we suppose that any of them refused to give their assistance towards so vast an Undertaking, which required so many hands. Fourthly, Noah, and the rest from whom the Hebrews are descended, are without reason exempted out of this number, since this Attempt had nothing of Impiety in it, although we own it was undiscree, and not agreeable to the Will of God, as shall be demonstrated below; neither if there had been any harm in it, does it therefore follow, that Men obnoxious to Sin, although in other respects they were not bad, abstain from it. Besides who can imagine, that while Noah
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and his Sons were alive, at so small a distance too from the Flood, Mankind was divided into *Faithful* and *Unfaithful*. We may indeed rationally enough suppose, that some of them were not so Pious as others, but however they do not therefore deserve to be stigmatized by the odious Character of *Unbelievers*.

IV. *Let us go down.* The Interpreters are divided about the meaning of this passage, as well as that of *Let us make Man* in the first Chapter of *Genesis*. Some both Jews and Christians are of opinion, that God is here introduced speaking *adversus suos*; after the manner of Kings, who as they act not only by their own Judgment, but that of their Privy-Counsellors, use the plural number when they speak to their People. Nay sometimes they speak after this fashion, when they consult their Nobles. Thus *1 Kings 12. 9.* *What Counsel give you that we may answer this People?* says Rehoboam to his young Advisers. *2 Chron. 10. 9.* *Esdra 4. 18.* Thus God himself also is described like a King consulting his Noble-men, *1 Kings 22. 20.* *And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab that he may go up, and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on this manner.*

Others pretend there is no necessity to have recourse to this Custom of Kings, since sometimes we find in the Hebrew, as well as in the Greek and Latin Languages, particular Men speaking of themselves in the plural Number. Thus *Balaam* speaks

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speaks to Job, when only they two were together, *Quando tandem finem imponetis sermonibus? Intelligite & postea loquemur. Cur reputamur ut Jumentum, & sorduimus in oculis vestri?* Job 18. 2, 3. see likewise *Cant.* 1. 4. *2 Sam.* 16. 20. and *Dan.* 2. 36.

Some of the later *Rabbins*, as well as the ancient *Jews* maintain, that God speaks to his Angels here as to his Guards. The *Chaldaean* Wise Men indeed never describe God doing any thing but without a great attendance of Angels, as *Jamblichus* often informs us, and particularly §. 5. c. 21. that all those Powers that are subject to them, go before the Presence of the Gods, and whenever they make a Procession to the Earth, bear them company. And the Jewish Masters, who, as some Learned Men imagine, borrow'd their Doctrine concerning Angels out of *Chaldaea*, were of the same Opinion. *Origen* in his Homily upon *Numbers* 11. is of this Opinion, and *St. Austin de Civ. Dei*, lib. 16. cap. 5.

Lastly, Some Christians believe that the Hypostasis of the Son and the Holy Ghost are here spoken to by the Hypostasis of the Father. 'Tis indeed certain that several Christians, even immediately after the times of the Apostles, imagined that in that famous passage of *Genesis*, *Let us make Man*, God the Father spoke to the Son. Thus *Barnabas* in the fourth Chapter of his Epistle, according to the *Paris* Edition, but in the fifth of that of *Oxford*, Our Lord, says he, vouchsafed to suffer for our Salvation, though he is Lord of the

the Universe, to whom his Father said before the Creation of the World, *Let us make Man.* Hag. Menard upon this place of *Barnabas*, has proved that some of the later Fathers after him, as *Justin, Irenaeus, Theophilus*, and several more, were of the same opinion. But after all, several Men of the greatest Reputation in the Learned World, think that neither of these two Passages are to be urged too positively against the Jews, as if they amounted to the force of a Demonstration.

V. The Hebrew Root *balal*, which we have Englished to *confound*, properly signifies to *minge things of a different nature*; but what it means in this place, is not agreed among the Annotators. Some are of opinion that God utterly extirpated the Memory of the Primitive Language out of the Minds of Men, and sent a new one to each Clan or Family: Others maintain that this happen'd neither to *Heber* nor any of his Progeny, who still kept up the use of the Primitive Language, *viz.* the Hebrew: And lastly, others pretend that only the Memories of Men were disturbed, so that they fell upon new Dialects of the first Tongue, but invented no new ones wholly different from the first; and these support their Hypothesis by the Signification of the word *Balal*, which signifies to *minge* and not to *create*. However, most of them are agreed that it happen'd in an instant, by a Divine Miracle. For my part, I see no reason why we should believe this Confusion was wrought

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in a moment: Though this History indeed is related in the compals of a few lines, and the event that followed upon God's Determination, is immediately subjoined, yet no rational Man will from thence conclude that it was all transacted on the sudden. Don't we find that *Moses* delivers the Original of Mankind in a short *Compendium*, and that the Occurrences of several Ages are related in a few lines. And therefore 'tis more credible that a Spirit of Discord was sent among Men, upon which they abandon'd this foolish Undertaking, and dispersing into the neighbouring Countries, and removing their Habitations from one place to another, as they happen'd to be straitned for want of room, till in procefs of time living at a great distance from one another, and maintaining little or no Correspondence, their Languages came to be changed. Now because these Passages are related by the sacred Historian in a compendious Narration, the Interpreters erroneously believed that they were done in as short a time, as the Verses in which they are set down, may be read.

As we have already shown, that those Persons may be said to speak one Tongue who live amicably and like Friends together; so the Jews say of those that are at variance, that their Tongues are not only confused, but divided. Thus *David* in the 55th Psalm v. 10. when his Enemies concerted together how to destroy him, *Lord*, says he, *divide their Tongues*; that
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is, make Discord and Dissention arise among them that they may no longer unanimously agree to act against me, and contrive my Destruction.

VI. As we have already observed, these Persons who attempted to build a Metropolis for all Mankind, may rather be charged with Imprudence or Folly, than any Impiety. Let us now see whether we may be able to conjecture for what reason God disliked and frustrated their Undertaking. 1. Two celebrated Rabbis, *Aben Ezra* and *Levi ben Gerson*, who deny that the Builders of *Babel* were guilty of any Sin, because they design'd nothing more by this Project than to perpetuate the Society of Mankind, and hinder them from dispersing, are of Opinion, that therefore God was pleased to frustrate their Attempt, least if they all lived within the limits of one Country, all Mankind might at once be destroy'd by an Earthquake, Conflagration, Hail, Deluge, or any Accidents of the like nature. 2. Since Empires are at first possess'd by those that are not the best of Men, but such as either by Fraud or Strength aspire to a Sovereignty above their Fellows, all Mankind wou'd have been subject to the Arbitrary Will of one Tyrant, as *Nimrod* is not long after said to have been, which might have proved the occasion of innumerable Calamities. For when there are several Republicks, or different Kingdoms, if the Inhabitants of one place happen to be oppress'd by Tyrannic Power,

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those that are able to endure the Yoke no longer, may fly into other Countries; which if there was only one Governour of the Universe they could never do, because they cou'd not go to desolate uninhabited places without apparent danger: Therefore all Men would be obnoxious to the Cruelty of one wicked Tyrant, if there was no more than one Monarchy in the World. 3. If the profligate Lives and Immoralities of the supream Governors are copied by the common People, as we find it true by a thousand Examples, then the Vices of ill Princes had in a short time been the Vices of all Mankind. On the other side, when several Kingdoms are on foot at the same time, if the Infection of Vice prevails in one place, Vertue and Good Manners flourish in another. If the truth of this Assertion wanted to be confirmed from Citations drawn out of History, we cou'd easily convince the Reader, that both under the Persian Empire which possessed a great part of *Asia*, and under the Macedonian which succeeded it; and lastly, under the Roman Monarchy when it was in its greatest extent, there was more Wickedness of all sorts committed, and the Manners of Men were generally more debauched and irregular, than when these conquer'd Countries set up several Republicks and Kingdoms of their own. 4. *Josephus, Ant. lib. 1. cap. 4.* who thinks that God would have them dispersed into several Colonies for the greater Increase and Propagation of Mankind, immediately

immediately adds this Reason, which is not to be despised, *least they should quarrel among themselves*, (while every one would pretend to make himself Master of the nearest and most fertile Lands;) *but that cultivating a greater space, they might enjoy a proportionable Increase of the Fruits of the Earth*. Therefore to close this Dissertation, for these Reasons, or some others of the like nature, it was by no means expedient that Mankind should live together in one Society and Government.

Dissertation VII.

Concerning Circumcision.

- I. *The Question debated, whether the Jews borrowed this Ceremony from the Egyptians, or they from the Jews.* II. *The Reasons anciently assigned for the Institution of it.* III. *The time when it was performed.* IV. *Other Jewish Rites examined in relation to their Original.*

I. **I**T hath been a Question long debated among Learned Men, Whether the Jews borrowed this Ceremony from the Egyptians, since it appears by the undoubted Testimonies of the Ancients that other Nations, and particularly the latter, used Circumcision; or on the other hand, Whether the Egyptians had it from

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the Jews? *Herodotus*, l. 2. maintains the first Opinion: *The Colchians, the Egyptians, and the Ethiopians*, says this Historian, *are the only People that used Circumcision from the beginning.* Now the *Colchians* and *Ethiopians* were Colonies of the *Egyptians*, and therefore borrow'd, without doubt, this Custom from their Founders. He immediately subjoins; *The Phœnicians, and the Syrians, that live in Palæstine, own that they learnt it of the Egyptians.* And to say the truth, the People of *Egypt*, as they were always extreamly tenacious of their own Customs, so they express'd that Contempt for those of foreign Nations, that they imagin'd themselves to be polluted, even with keeping any Correspondence with Strangers. *They follow the Customs of their Fathers, and learn no other,* are the words of *Herodotus*, l. 2. cap. 78. who repeats the same cap. 91. Notwithstanding this Testimony is so plain against them, yet several Persons maintain that Circumcision began among the *Jews*, and particularly from *Abraham*, whom God commanded to observe it, as is evident from the 17th Chapter of *Genesis*, as a peculiar sign to distinguish his Posterity from other Nations. The Learned *Spencer*, *de Legibus Mos. lib. 1. cap. 4.* cites the Reasons urged on both sides at large, and compares them whom the Reader may consult for his farther Satisfaction. 'Tis indeed not improbable to suppose, that though this Custom had been long before observ'd by the *Egyptians*, either for the

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sake of Cleanliness, which they principally affected, or for some other reason we are unacquainted with; yet God for another End might enjoin *Abraham* to observe it. And thus neither the *Jews* derived it from the *Egyptians*, nor the *Egyptians* from the *Jews*, although the *Egyptian* Custom gave the occasion to the Divine Precept. It seems incredible to many, that so inconvenient and troublesome a Ceremony, and when performed upon Persons that were arrived to years of Maturity, so indecent; and lastly, which does not in the least contribute to Piety, and Good Manners, should be at first instituted by God Almighty. They therefore suspect that *Abraham*, who had seen it done in *Egypt*, and perhaps was inform'd by some *Egyptian* Servants, whom he had carried with him from *Egypt* into *Canaan*, of the Reasons they alledged for a Rite which seems otherwise so absurd, to have mightily approv'd of it: which, when God Almighty perceiv'd, who by a wonderful Condescension accommodates himself to humane Imbecillity, commanded *Abraham* to observe that Custom, which he liked in other Nations. And yet it is not to be concluded from hence, that the Circumcision of the *Jews* and the *Egyptians* is the same, because, not to mention that it was not done at the same time, and perhaps the Rites too were different, the cause in both was not the same. *Origen*, in his Learned Book against *Gelsus*, has a remarkable Passage upon this occasion. *Lib. 5. p. 263.*

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of the Cambridge Edition. The reason of the Jewish Circumcision was not the same with that of the Egyptians or Colebians, and therefore we must not suppose the Circumcision was the same. As for instance, a Priest that offers Sacrifice, does not offer it to the same Divinity, though he seems to perform those sacred Rites after the same manner; and as he that prays does not say the same Prayer with another, although he supplicates for the same things; so likewise though one be circumcised, we must not infer that there is no real difference between his Circumcision, and that of other People. For the Intention, the Law, and Will of him that circumcises, makes it a different matter.

II. The ancient Jews were used to assign four Reasons why this Covenant was rather instituted in the Prepuce, than any other part of the Body. The first is, *χαλεπὴ νόσος ἐστὶν δυσίατος καὶ ἀποδιὰ, ἣ ἀσθεγὰ καλεῖται ἀπὸ τοῦ κατὰ ἐντροφίμω;* the Prevention of a troublesome Disease, and hard to be cured, which they call a Caruncle, because it is apt to be inflamed. These are the express words of Philo, in his Treatise concerning Circumcision, who was of Opinion, That those that were uncircumcised, were more obnoxious to this Distemper than the Circumcised. Cornelius Celsus, l. 6. c. 18. §. 3. teaches us a way how to cure this Disease; but I very much question whether it visits the Uncircumcised, more than the Circumcised, provided they live chastly.

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The other is, ἡ ἀπόλυτος καθαρότης, πρὸς τὸ ἀεμιόντον πάσης ἡλικίας; the Purity of the whole Body, which becomes those of the sacerdotal Function: For which reason the Egyptian Priests shaved their Bodies, because something stuck to the Hair and Body, which was to be cleansed. But too great an Affectation of Cleanliness is troublesome and superstitious, as a moderate Care, especially in a hot Climate, is both wholesome and commendable.

The third is, ἡ πρὸς τὴν καρδίαν ὁμοιότης τῷ περιτομῆτος μέμπος; the resemblance of the circumcised part with the Heart: So that the Circumcision of this part was as it were a Symbol of the Circumcision of the Heart; that is to say, of a Mind purged from all unlawful Affections; which is the reason that the Jews are frequently upbraided with an uncircumcised Heart. See Leviticus 26. 41. But Philo, and some others, believed, that the renouncing of all dishonest Pleasures was chiefly signified by it: Because among the great variety of Pleasures, that of carnal Copulation is said to exceed the rest; our Lawgivers thought fit to circumcise the Instrument of Coition, obscurely intimating hereby, a Circumcision of all superfluous and immoderate Pleasure, and not of one alone; but this being the greatest, and that to which Mankind expresses the fiercest Inclination, comprehends all the rest. And this indeed is agreeable to the Custom of the Eastern Nations, who instructed their Disciples, not only by words, but things in order to
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make the greater Impression upon their Minds.

The fourth, and the most necessary of all, as *Philo* tells us, was ἡ πρὸς πολυγονίαν παρασκευὴ; *a Preparative to beget a numerous Issue*; for, if we may believe him, *those Nations which use Circumcision, are infinitely more populous than others.* But, with Submission be it spoken, this Reason seems to be none of the truest, as is evident by the Example of the Modern *Jews* and *Mahumetans.* But perhaps *Philo* was of this Opinion, because he saw his Country-men the *Egyptians* begot abundance of Children, which is not however to be ascribed to their Circumcision, but to the Disposition of their Climate and Soil; or as some would have it, to the Water of *Nile.* *Rabbi Levi Barcinonensis*, who has plainly and briefly expounded the *Mosaical* Precepts, after he has told us of I know not what Perfection of Body and Soul, which, as he pretends, is either signified, or conferr'd by the *Jewish* Circumcision, adds this as his last and strongest Reason, that *God* for ever blessed hereby distinguishes his Select People from others, by setting a Mark on their Bodies. And pursuant to this 'tis worthy of Observation, that in the *East*, and in *Greece*, and *Italy*, Men were anointed naked, or walked in the Sun, or used Athletical Exercises, or washed themselves in Company with others; whereby 'twas an impossible matter to conceal Circumcision: for which reason those Persons that had no mind to pass for *Jews*,
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got a Trick of drawing forward the Prepuce, as you may find in *Grotius* upon the 1st Epistle of the *Corinthians*, Ch. 7. v. 18. The same Artifice was used by those under the Emperor *Domitian*, who thought fit to live within the City, and yet wou'd not pay the Tributes that were imposed upon those of the *Jewish* Nation; for they so well dissembled the matter, that when they were searched they cou'd not be discovered. I remember, says *Suetonius*, in his Life of *Domitian*, ch. 12. I was present when an old Fellow, ninety years of Age, was examin'd by the Procurator and a large Assembly, whether he was circumcised or no.

III. As for the time of its Celebration, it was precisely observ'd on the eighth Day after the Birth of the Child; which is to be understood of their Children or Servants that were born at home, for they could not circumcise the rest, before they had them. Nothing but Sickness, as the Rabbies inform us, cou'd excuse the deferring of it beyond this time; and indeed, since this Ceremony was perform'd upon an Infant with much more Ease and Decency, than it cou'd be upon those of a riper Age, it seems agreeable to believe, that a positive time was appointed, least by degrees it should be deferr'd too far, and at last wholly laid aside. But besides the express Words of the Law, the *Jews* might be the more inclin'd to observe the Execution of it upon the eighth Day, because, as we find in *Origen*, *contra Cels.* l. 5. the *Colchians*, the *Egyptians*

Egyptians and Israelites, used it later ; by which Circumstance they supposed their Circumcision to be distinguished from all others. The voluntary Neglect of it, according to some Christian Interpreters, was punished by Death, according to others by Excommunication ; however, this is certain, that an uncircumcised *Hebrew*, if he were publicly known to be such, forfeited all the Rights and Privileges of a Member of that Republick ; and if he was not actually banished, was reckon'd to be no better than a *Heathen*. 'Tis probable, that the Author of these Verses, which are to be found among the Fragments of *Petronius*, meant this, which without doubt he had heard from some *Jews* of his Age.

Judæus licet & porcinum nomen adoret,
Et celli (i.e. Asini) summas advocet auricular;
Ni tamen & ferro succiderit inguinis oram,
Et nisi nudatum solverit arte caput.
Exemptus populo Graiam migrabit ad urbem,
Et non jejund sabbata lege premet.
Una est nobilitas, argumentumq; coloris
Ingenui, timidus non habuisse manus.

The Pagans erroneously believ'd, that a Hog was worshipt by the *Jews*, because they abstain'd from eating of that Creature ; the other Calumny of their adoring an *Ass's* Head, is indeed grosser ; but after this manner either *Petronius*, or some one else, describes the *Jewish* Religion. However, he tells us, that the Adoration of these Deities was not sufficient for the
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Jews; but that unless he was likewise circumcised, he was not esteem'd a *Jew*, but reckon'd as a *Greek*; who being descended from *Abraham*, presum'd to worship the God of the *Jews*, uncircumcised.

IV. What has been said of Circumcision, may be affirm'd of several other Rites and Ceremonies in use with the *Hebrews*, viz. that whatever laudable or innocent Institutions their Neighbours the Heathens had, the Patriarchs might confirm with their Example. Now, as when we go to handle any thing of value which we mightily esteem, or when we are to appear upon any solemn occasion, we wash our Hands, least any Filth or Dirt should stick to them, and put on our cleanest Apparel: So those, that were going upon the Exercise of Religious Duties, thought it a heinous Sin to approach the Altar with unwashed Hands, and dirty Linen; not that Nastiness was of it self hated by God Almighty, but because it seem'd to intimate a Neglect of the Business then in doing, and might give those Persons, who judge of things by exterior Appearances, a Contempt and Disrelish for sacred things. And as the Patriarchs were not unacquainted with this Reason, can any one think it strange that it was approved by them? If any one pretends to maintain, that the Patriarchs were the Inventors of this, and the like Rites; in the first place 'tis certain he is destitute of the Authority of the Scripture, which no where affirms so much: and secondly, it will
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be a difficult matter to prove, that the most flourishing Nations in the World borrowed these Rites from the *Hebrews*, who were a despicable and unknown People, and neither for Magnificence or Antiquity to be compar'd with the *Ægyptians* and *Babylonians*. Thus for instance, we read, *Gen. c. 28. 18.* that *Jacob* erected a Stone, and poured Oyl upon the top of it. 'Tis evident from several Authors that the *Phœnicians*, and particularly the *Syrians*, used to consecrate rude, unwrought Stones, and anointed them with Oyl, and several believe that they imitated *Jacob* in this particular, and that from them this Custom was propagated to other Nations. But certainly 'tis much more probable, that *Jacob* follow'd a Custom used long before his time, and that one Man imitated those populous Nations, where he lived, than that these Nations should tread after the Footsteps of a Person who was in a manner unknown to them, and differ'd from them in his Sentiments of Religion. Before God Almighty had revealed to *Moses* after what manner he would be worshipped, and what sacred Rites he would have observ'd, pious Men were left to their own liberty, to follow what Rites they pleased, provided the Religion of the Mind, which is the only true Religion, was not violated by them: for as Words depend from use, which alone stamps a peculiar Force and Meaning upon them, so the Signification of all external indifferent Ceremonies is just such, as the Person that uses them, does make them.

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Dissertation VIII.

Concerning the Divine Appearances in the Old Testament.

I. *That Moses nowhere gives us a full account of them.* II. *Of those that happen'd by night, or when they were asleep.* III. *Of those that were seen in the day-time.* IV. *By what Means they were able to distinguish them from Humane Impostures.* V. *How they knew God from a Good Angel; and lastly, a Good Angel from an Evil Spirit.*

I. **T**HOUGH *Moses* makes frequent mention of the Divine Appearances, yet he nowhere gives us so full a Description of them as to let us know by what particular Tokens, the Ancients, to whom God vouchsafed to reveal himself, were able to discover him. Therefore we have nothing more left us to do, but out of the several Histories we find scatter'd up and down the sacred Writers, to gather as many Circumstances of this matter as we can. Briefly, then, both God and Angels are said to have appeared by night and by day, in Dreams, and in waking to *Abraham* and several more beside him.

II. By

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II. By night he said those things to *Abraham* which we read of Chapter the fiftteenth, where God is said to have spoken to him in a *Vision*; which seems to be the same, as in the *Visions of the night*, Ch. 46. v. 2. In the same, viz. the 15th Chapter, *Abraham*, being fast asleep, hears the Voice of God calling out to him. *Jacob* likewise sees, and hears God in his sleep, ch. 27. 12. 13. and elsewhere. Nay, God warns *Abimelech*, ch. 20. 20. and *Laban*, ch. 31. 24. when they were asleep. Now it appears from the above-mentioned places, that they heard a certain Voice in their Sleep; but it is not so perspicuous, from whence the Sound of the Words seemed to proceed; neither does *Moses* inform us what sort of Ideas, or Images, affected their Minds, when they understood that God spoke to them. Perhaps no Impression was made upon them, but only a Voice heard, as it is evident by the History of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 3. who heard a Voice which awaked him. Others in their Sleep thought they heard a Voice, and made answer again, as *Abimelech*, ch. 20. and *Abraham*, ch. 15. *Jacob* also saw a certain Resemblance of God sitting upon a Ladder, which seem'd to speak, ch. 27. 19. But *Moses* does not subjoin what it was; however, it appears to have been the same which was seen by those that were awake, of which we shall discourse anon.

If any one shall here enquire, how they distinguished Divine Dreams from those that were purely

purely natural? 'Tis easier to acquaint him with what others have conjectur'd, than to give any positive Determination of the matter. But the Mischief is, that what they tell us upon this occasion, is not drawn from their own Experience, nor from the Relation of those who have actually tried these things, but from certain Philosophical Conjectures, as we may see in *Jamblichus de Myster. Sect. 3. cap. 2. and Seqq.* and *J. Smith*, who in his *Dissertation of Prophecy*, ch. 3. and 4. has gathered all the Opinions of the Ancients about this difficult Point. If we were obliged, out of the several Conjectures, to choose that which pleases us most, we should believe that those speak most judiciously to the business in hand, who affirm, that Divine Dreams are no otherwise to be distinguished from the rest, than that, 1. They have none of those confused and idle Phantasms that delude us in other Dreams, but distinctly represented to our Minds whatever Things or Being God was pleased to send, without any mixture of foreign Images or Words; so that every thing was very plainly seen, or heard. 2. That they are more lively than other Dreams, and make a more forcible Impression upon the Mind, so that they were deeply fixt in the Memory, which however did not always happen, as appears by *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream*, *Dan. 2.* where he is said to have forgotten it, although he knew that *Daniel*, when he remembred him of it, spoke the Truth to him. 3. That they should hear God, or his Angels,

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so speak to them, that they should be fully convinc'd that their Dreams proceeded from them. Now if all these Circumstances concurred in a Dream, there would be no room left to doubt, but that they were divinely inspired, especially when it was a received Opinion, that God Almighty reveal'd himself oftentimes to Men in Dreams, admonishing of several things when they were asleep, and that these were the true Characteristicks of Divine Dreams. Neither is it to be supposed, that God, who sees and hears all things, should suffer those that love him to be imposed upon by unclean Spirits, or even perplexed by the fantastical Operations of Nature it self, so as to be deceived in an Affair of this consequence.

III. To come now to those Divine Appearances that affected them by day, and when they were awake. 2. A Voice was heard without any Resemblance, or Image, which was enough to have awaked them, though they were asleep. Thus *Samuel* being call'd by name, awaked, and distinctly heard the other words which God spoke to him, 1 *Sam.* 3. Thus likewise *Elias* heard a strong and vehement Wind, overturning Mountains, and bruising the Rocks before the Lord: after this he perceiv'd a Commotion, and after that he saw a Fire, then he heard the whistling of a small Wind; which being done, a Voice came to him, saying, *What dost thou do here*, *Elias*? 1 *Kings* 19. 11. and *Seqq.* without any Form, or Representation at all. 2. Sometimes

times that Voice was sent down from Heaven, as that which *Abraham* heard, when he was going to sacrifice his Son *Isaac*. 3. A Voice at other times did proceed neither from Heaven, or the Clouds only, but from the midst of a Fire, or Storm, as *Exod.* 19. and 20. and no Form was discover'd of him that spoke: After this manner God speaks to *Job* out of a Whirlwind. 4. A Resemblance showing it self to Men that were awake, sometimes discours'd with them, and did several things in their sight; so that one Man thought he spoke all the while with another Man; whereas it appears by what follows, and the whole Narration, that God, or an Angel, lay hid under a humane Shape, as *Gen.* 18. and elsewhere. See likewise *Judg.* 13. 5. and *Seqq.* Oftentimes too God appear'd like a Man in Prophetical Visions by night, as *Isa.* 6. 1. *Ezek.* 1. 26. I am of Opinion, that as often as we meet with this Expression, *and God was seen*, as in *Gen.* ch. 12. 7. that a humane Shape was seen.

Thus we have shown how many several ways God is said to have revealed himself to those that were asleep, and awake; but so, that we did not make any Distinction between the Divine Appearances, and those of Angels: It remains for us now to enquire, by what means they cou'd secure themselves from humane Impostures; and next how they knew God from a Good Angel, and a Good Angel from a Bad One, whenever any of the above-mention'd Revelations happen'd to them?

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IV. That there was no humane Fraud or Imposture used, if a Voice was heard, did appear from hence. 1. Because sometimes this Voice was much greater than a Man's; such was that, which from the top of Mount *Sinai*, a very high Mountain, was on every side heard by the whole People of *Israel*. *St. John*, *Rev.* 1. 10. compares the Voice of Christ appearing, to the Sound of a Trumpet; nay, to the Noise of the Sea, or a mighty River, in the 15th Verse of the same Chapter. 2. Because it came from those places where no Man was, or from whence it cou'd not be sent by Men, as when *Samuel* heard a Voice proceeding from the place where the Ark was, and *Abraham* and the *Israelites* from the Clouds, and the midst of Fire. They sometimes discover'd an Angel discoursing with them under a humane Shape, by the Majesty of his Looks, and the unusual Splendor of his Eyes. The Wife of *Manoah* in *Jud.* 13. 6. *The Man of God*, says she of the Angel whom she saw, *comes towards me, and his Look is like the Look of an Angel of God, very terrible.* By this means *Nebuchadnezzar* seems to have known the Angel among the Children, whom he commanded to be thrown into the fiery Furnace: *The Resemblance of the fourth*, says he, *is like that of one of the Sons of God.* Sometimes miraculous Actions, that were above the Power of humane Performance, were added, as not to mention any more, we may gather from the History of *Gideon*, *Jud.* 6. 17. I don't now speak of the
Event

Event of things foretold, for the Question at present is, How at the very moment when an Appearance happen'd, they were able to distinguish it from a humane Trick, before the Truth of those things they predicted, was ratified by the Event ?

V. The other Question is much more difficult, viz. By what means they knew, whether *the Highest*, and *the God of all Gods*, appear'd, or (if I may be allow'd the Expression) one of the inferior Gods, or good Angels, dispatched for that Message by him ? The ancient *Jews* don't seem to have sufficiently considered this matter, since 'tis impossible to find out in any Narration of these Appearances, whether God himself or an Angel speaks ; and God and his Angels are said to have appear'd promiscuously in one and the same ἐπιφανεία. See *Gen.* ch. 16, 12. ch. 22. v. 1. 11, 12. *Exod.* 3. 2. and *Seqq.* So, though, *Exod.* 20. the Lord God is said to have spoken, yet the old *Hebrews* were of Opinion, that the Law was delivered by Angels, as appears from *Galatians* 3. 19. *Heb.* 2. 2. *Act.* 7. v. 38. 53. and the reason of it seems to be this, because good Angels never tell or command Men any thing in their own name, but behave themselves as the Ambassadors and Ministers of the High God. Hence *St. Austin*, *Quæst. in Genes.* 37. and elsewhere has observed, that it is not so much the Angel that speaks, as God in the Angel. Perhaps, says he of *Abraham*, he understood it was God that spoke to him, by some plain and manifest Proofs of the Divine Majesty,

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Which being so, it signified nothing to know whether God or an Angel spoke to them. The *Chaldeans* indeed, whose Doctrine *Jamblichus* delivers in his Book of Mysteries, *Sect. 2. ch. 3. & Seqq.* pretended to know, *what was the certain Token of the Presence of God, or an Angel, or an Arch-angel, or a Dæmon, or a Prince, or a Soul?* This was *Porphyry's* Question, in which *Jamblichus* largely endeavours to satisfy him; but I shall not here cite those Passages in him, not that every thing he there says is groundless and chimerical, but because the Brevity of our Work will not allow us to be more prolix upon this Subject.

The pious Men among the ancient *Hebrews* don't seem to have been very apprehensive of the Frauds of Evil Angels in this Affair, because they did not question but that the Good Angels, who were appointed by God Almighty to protect the Vertuous, wou'd frustrate any such Design. And indeed it was not agreeable to the Divine Goodness, to expose those that fear'd him, to invincible Temptations, which he had certainly done, if there were no exterior Signs to distinguish Evil Spirits from the Good, or if those Characteristicks, which were looked upon by all Mankind to be infallible Indications of a Divine, or Angelical Apparition, might be usurped by a wicked Power. Nevertheless I will not deny, but that among a vicious reprobate People, whom God Almighty may be supposed to have deliver'd over to the Devil, it might so fall out, that unclean Spirits
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sometimes deceived them with the like Appearances, as we have mention'd. But this was not the case of the Righteous.

Dissertation IX.

Concerning the Subversion of Sodom, and the Neighbouring Cities.

I. *The Occasion of this Dissertation.* II. *The Situation of Sodom, and the Neighbouring Cities.* III. *The Sins they were guilty of.* IV. *A Description of their Subversion.* V. *The Lacus Asphaltites, or Dead Sea, an everlasting Monument of their Destruction.* VI. *A Description of the Country about it, from whence the seventh Verse in St. Jude's Catholick Epistle is explained, and some other places of the New Testament.* VII. *This History gave occasion to some remarkable Circumstances in the Story of Baucis and Philemon, which Observation is illustrated by several Examples.* VIII. *Whether the Subversion of these Cities, situated upon the River Jordan, is to be ascribed to a Miracle, or is the common Method of God Almighty's Providence, when he punishes Offenders.*

I. **A**mong those other Punishments which the sacred Historians tell us the Divine Justice

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Justice has inflicted upon wicked Men, few of them are more wonderful than the sudden Destruction of *Sodom*, and the adjoining Cities. However, the Interpreters of the Scripture, when they come to this surprizing Relation, scarce seem to have employ'd the care they usually bestow upon other places. For which reason we judg'd it convenient to publish this Dissertation, where we have treated this Matter more amply than the narrow limits of our Commentary wou'd allow. All the Translators which it has been my fortune hitherto to see, as if they imagin'd there was no difficulty in the case, or else had nothing to remark upon so important a Scene, barely tell us, that this Country was burnt, and subverted by fire from Heaven; and having done so, think they have discharged all that is required from a Translator. The truth is, what we have heard, and imbibed from our Infancy, becomes at last so familiar to us, that we receive it almost without Examination. But as I have read this History with no little Application, so methinks I have discover'd several Particulars in it worthy of Observation; by which not only this Narration may be wonderfully illustrated, but many other Passages of the H. Bible conveniently expounded. What we have therefore observed upon this Occasion, we have thrown into the following Dissertation; which if we have not handled with that Accuracy as the Dignity of the Subject seems to deserve, yet since we have

done
G. H.

done it to the best of our Abilities, we hope the Learned Reader will favourably receive it.

II. Before we examine the Destruction it self, it will be necessary for us to give a short Description of the Situation of *Sodom, Gomorrah, Adma* and *Zeboim*; because by this means we shall the better understand how we come to see nothing but a stinking Lake, where this most delightful Country formerly stood. *Moses* thus describes the Situation of these Cities, *Gen. 13. 10*: where he relates after what manner *Lot* and *Abraham* parted: *But Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, or the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.*

In the first place from hence we gather, that these Cities were situated on both sides of the River *Jordan*; for the plain of *Jordan* is here called, ἡ περὶ ὧρος τῆ Ἰορδάνου, as the Septuagint has rightly translated, rather following the Sense than the genuine Signification of the Hebrew word *Chicchar*, which properly signifies a plain Country, as we find *Gen. 19. v. 17.* where it is opposed to a mountainous Region. For this reason in following times this Country was called the μεγαπῆδον, or Great Field; as likewise αὐλῶν, or the Valley. To make this more evidently appear, we will here set down the words of *Josephus*, who thus describes it in the fifth

Book

Book

Book *de Bello Jud.* Chap. 27. *Near to it,*

* we find a barren Mountain, but of a
 * Meaning
Jericho. vast length, for Northwards it reaches
 as far as the Country of the Scythopo-

litæ, and towards the South it extends as far as
 the Land of Sodom, and the bounds of the Dead
 Sea. Opposite to it, beyond Jordan, lies a Moun-
 tain which begins from Julias, and the Northern
 Country, and Southwards spreads as far as Somor-
 ra which adjoins to Petra, a City of Arabia. And
 here too is a Mountain, called the Iron Moun-
 tain, which reaches as far as the Country of Mo-
 ab. The Valley between these Mountains is
 the same we are now talking of, and Josephus
 gives us the following Description of it. The
 Country which lies in the middle between these
 Mountains, is called the ΜΕΤΑΠΕΔΙΟΝ, or
 Great Field, and reaches from the Village of
 Ginnabrin to the Lacus Aspháltites. 'Tis a Thou-
 sand two hundred furlongs in length, and sixscore
 in breadth. The River Jordan runs through the
 middle of it. The same place, from the nature
 of its Situation, is call'd 'Αυλὼν, or the Valley;
 although St. Jerome, in his *Loci Hæbraici*, er-
 roneously pretends, that it is a Hebrew word.
Aulon, says he, is not a Greek word, as some
 Persons imagine, but Hebrew: 'Tis the name of
 a large and spacious Valley of a prodigious length,
 which is surrounded on every side by a continued
 ridge of Mountains; which begin from Mount Li-
 banus and beyond it, and reach to the Desert of
 Paran.

Paran. *There are several noble Cities in this Aulon, or Valley, as Scythopolis, Tiberias, and the Lake near it; nay Jericho, the Dead Sea, and all the Countries about it through which the River Jordan runs, which arises from the Fountain Paneas, and so falls into the Dead Sea.* The upper parts of this capacious Vale were exceeding fertile, full of Pastures, and planted with all sorts of Trees; so that as *Josephus, l. 3. de Bell. Jud. cap. 4.* informs us, it would invite even those who are the least inclined to such a Life, to cultivate it. But the middle parts, except where the River *Jordan* water'd them, were burnt up in the Summer, as we are told by *Josephus* in the above-mentioned place. *In the Summer, says he, all this Plain is burnt up, and by reason of the extream Vehemence of the Heat, the Air becomes very unhealthful, for 'tis all parch'd, but where Jordan runs; on the Banks of which River there are the most beautiful Groves of Palm-trees.* But here we have to do with neither of these parts, but only with the lowest, which reaches from *Jericho* to the Mountains of *Idumea*, where now the *Lacus Asphaltites* is, of which more hereafter. In the mean time, we must observe by the bye, that the Waters of *Jordan*, by reason of the perpetual ridge of Hills that shut it up on every side from East and West, had no Outlet at all, but ran to the Southward.

In the second place, we must not lightly pass over what *Moses* says, that the Southern part of
this

this Valley, as you go to *Zoar*, was watered like the Paradise of the Lord, or the Land of *Ægypt*. All which words require a particular Illustration by themselves; but first of all we will show by the Testimony of other Writers, that this tract of Ground was exceedingly well watered, which is a thing of great importance in the present Disquisition. To begin then with the Country about *Jericho*: *Strabo* in his sixteenth Book, pag. 525. of *Isaac Casaubon's* Edition at *Geneva*, affirms, that it is plentifully stored with Water. *Jericho* is a Plain, on every side surrounded with Hills, and in some parts bending like a Theatre. It abounds with Palm-trees mixt, and several other Trees, but it particularly abounds with the former. 'Tis an hundred Furlongs in length, and is *all well watered*, and full of *Inhabitants*. Now how this Country comes to be so plentifully water'd, *Josephus* informs us in the above-mentioned place, in the following words: Near *Jericho* is a plentiful Spring, and most convenient for watering. We shall not here set down what he relates of an Alteration made in this Water by *Elisba*, nor what he tells us of the great Wholesomeness of this Well, as being borrowed from an uncertain Tradition; but thus he goes on: *It waters* a far greater space than any *other Fountain*, viz. seventy Furlongs long, and twenty in breadth. Southwards of the Province of *Jericho* he describes the Brook, or Vale, of *Kedron*, which carries Water from *Jerusalem* to the *Dead Sea*; but

but because *Kedron* is frequently mentioned as a dry Valley, and there is some reason to doubt whether it was a Valley, or a Brook, we shall leave the matter undetermin'd, and proceed to the Eastern Bank of the *Lacus Asphaltites*.

In this place was a famous Fountain, called *Callirrhoe*, to which *Herod* went from *Jericho* when he was sick, as *Josephus* tells us, *lib. 17.* of his *Jewish Antiquities*, ch. 8. Crossing *Jordan* he went to the hot Waters near *Callirrhoe*, which, besides their Virtue in all Diseases, may be safely drunk. This Water runs into the *Dead Sea*. *Pliny* places this Fountain on the South-side of the Lake; for after he has said, *lib. 5. cap. 16.* that Eastwards it looks upon *Arabia Nomadum*, and *Machærus* on the South, he adds; On the same side is a hot Spring of a Medicinal Virtue, call'd *Callirrhoe*, denoting the Excellency of its Waters by its Name.

From the East too the River *Arnon* falls into the *Lacus Asphaltites*, which arising in the Borders of *Arabia*, as we find in *Josephus*, l. 4. c. 4. of his *Jewish Antiquities*; and running through the whole extent of the Desert, falls into the *Dead Sea*, and divides the Country of the *Moa-bites* from that of the *Amorites*.

More to the Southward was the Brook *Zered*, mentioned by *Moses*, *Numb. 21. 12. Deut. 2. 13, 14.* and this likewise seems to fall into the *Lacus Asphaltites*. From whence we may gather, that all the lower part of *Jordan*, where the *Dead Sea* now is, was not only watered with the Streams of
that

that River, but likewise with several Fountains and Brooks which ran into it. Now since all this Water had no Inlet into the Sea, it must of necessity follow, that it was all swallowed up in the Sands, every way encompassing it, which might so much the more easily be done, because the Inhabitants of hot Countries use to divide their Rivers into several smaller Branches for the benefit of their Fields; and this is the reason that these Rivers, being thus exhausted in several places, are not able to carry their Waters to the Sea. We brought the like instance of *Chrysorrhoas*, in *Gen. 2. 11*. I know indeed the Counterfeit *Aristeas* very gravely tells us, that *Jordan* carries its Waters into another River near the Country of the *Ptolomies*, which River has a Passage into the Sea. But every body knows this to be a meer Fiction, and are satisfied that the *Lacus Asphaltites* has no Outlet.

But to return to *Moses*, he not only informs us, that the lower-most part of the Plain of *Jordan* was well water'd; but he compares it to two well water'd places, and that part of it, which by reason it receiv'd so great Plenty of Water, was exceeding fruitful, he thus describes, as the Garden of the Lord, as the Land of *Ægypt*, in the way that leads to *Zoar*. This is the true Order of *Moses's* words; which if they were to be read as we find them in our Bibles, it would be an *Hyperbaton*, therefore they are to be placed as we have done them. For from this mountainous Country, which we have already described out
of

of *Josephus*, where *Abraham* pitched his Tents, when *Lot* parted from him, as he went to the opposite Hills beyond *Jordan* by *Zoar*, he first saw the Vale of *Jericho*, watered with a most plentiful Fountain, then *Jordan* and *Callirrhoe*. Therefore this Plain by which Men went to *Zoar*, very well deserved to be called well-watered. An Example of the like Perturbation of the words we find in *Genesis* 25. 18. But if any one will not admit of a Trajection here, the *Syrian* Interpreter published in the *London Polyglots*, furnishes us with another convenient Reading, where for *Zoar* we meet *Zoan*, that is *Tanis*, mentioned by *Moses*, *Numb.* 13. 23. and *Psal.* 78. 12. And indeed to describe any well-watered place, one cou'd not produce a fitter instance than the *Lower Ægypt*, and particularly where the Road was from *Canaan* to *Tanis*. For it was not only abundantly refreshed with the *Nile*, cut into several Branches, but it was full of Lakes and Morasses. To confirm which Assertion, because 'tis sufficiently known to all that are not utterly unacquainted with the Chorography of *Ægypt*, I will only alledge the Testimony of *Strabo*, *lib.* 17. p. 552. Above the *Mendesian* and *Tanitic* Mouth of the *Nile*, is a vast Lake, &c. then the *Tanitic* Mouth, and the *Tanitic* Province, in which is *Tanis*, a famous City. Between the *Tanitick* and *Pelusiack* Mouth (through which those that come from *Canaan* to these places must travel) there are Pools, and great and continued Morasses, full of Villages.

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But 'tis wholly indifferent to us whether
 Lektion, viz. that of the common Bibles, or that
 of the *Syriac* Interpreter, the Reader will be
 pleased to follow, provided he remembers that
 the Plain of *Jordan* is compared to the *Lower*
Egypt, upon the account of its well-watered
 Pastures. As for the Paradise of the Lord, to
 which it is likewise compared, we cannot say
 any thing of it here, which we have
 * See the 12^b Dissertation. not taken notice of in our * Anno-
 tations.

In the third place we must take notice, that
 there were *Pits of Bitumen* in this Tract of
 ground, as *Moses* informs us, *Gen.* 14. 10. where
 after he has related the Overthrow of the Men
 of *Sodom*, the *Valley of Siddim*, says he, *was*
full of Slime-pits, and the Kings of Sodom and
Gomorrhah fled, and were there destroyed. From
 this remarkable Passage we gather, that even
 before there was any such thing as the *Lacus*
Asphaltites, that Plenty of Bitumen boil'd up
 out of the ground, and there was used to be got.
 Which being diluted by the confluence of so ma-
 ny Waters, it becomes Liquid, as we are told
 by *Pliny*, *lib.* 35. c. 15. though it seems to have
 been thick before, for the reason alledged in our
 Commentary. Least the Reader should be at
 a loss, we have transcribed *Pliny's* words, and
 some others of the like nature, concerning Bitu-
 men out of other Authors. ' *Bitumen*, says
 ' he, *which in some places is a Mud, in others an*
 ' *Earth*, is a perfect *Limus*, or Mud, as it comes

out

out of the Lake in *Judaea*; but in *Syria* near a Sea-port Town, called *Sidon*, it is an Earth: Both of them may be made thick and consistent. There is likewise a sort of Liquid *Bitumen*, as that which comes from *Zant* and *Babylon*, &c. All which the Greeks call *Pisfaspbalson*, from the likeness of Pitch and Bitumen. Consult *Dioscorides*, *lib. I. c. 99*, & *100*. *Strabo* in abundance of places tells us, that Bitumen was got both out of the Earth, and out of Fountains. These are his words, *lib. 16. p. 511*. Great quantities of Bitumen grow in *Babylonia*, of which *Eratosthenes* speaks after the following manner. The Liquid *Bitumen*, which they call *Naphtha*, is to be found in *Susiane the dry*, which will grow hard in *Babylonia*, a Well of which stuff there is near *Naphtha*. Consult likewise what he says of a Fountain of Bitumen in the Province of the *Apolloniata*, *lib. 7. p. 219*. and the several Authors cited by *Is. Causaubon* upon that place.

But as *Moses* mentions Pits of Bitumen in the Plain of *Jordan*, so likewise does *Herodotus*, *l. 6. c. 119*. tell us of a Pit which affords three sorts of things, for they draw Bitumen, Salt, and Oyl out of it, after the following manner: 'Tis drawn out by a Bucket, with half a Bottle fastened to it, which serves instead of a Picher; this being set down into the Pit, whatever it brings up is immediately poured into a Cistern, and being poured out of that into another, it produces three several things; it affords Bitumen

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and Salt presently, &c. But this was Liquid Bitumen; some of the Ancients have even taken notice of the *Caverns* from whence the *Babylonians* had it dry. *Curtius, lib:5. c.1.* There is a Cavern in that place, from which a Fountain throws up a prodigious quantity of Bitumen, so that 'tis manifestly plain that the *Babylonian* Walls of mighty Workmanship, were cemented with the Bitumen of this Fountain.

This therefore was the Nature of this Soil, this the Situation of the Cities in the Plain of *Jordan*. Upon which it happened, as we shall hereafter see, that as the Ground sunk down, a great Lake of Bitumen sprung up in its room.

III. As the *Babylonian* Soil was wonderfully fertile, by reason it was irrigated by the *Euphrates*, and the nature of the Country; so the lowermost part of this large Plain was for the same reason of equal Fecundity with it. And as the *Babylonians* who flowed in all manner of Plenty, were addicted to all sorts of Lust; so the *Sodomites* and their Neighbours, by the same Infirmary of humane Nature, (which uses to abuse God Almighty's Gifts) abandoned themselves to all the degrees of Wickedness, as *Moses* particularly informs us, *Gen. 18, & 19.* After Men were satiated with good things, says *Philo* in his Book concerning *Abraham*, this Satiety, after the manner of the World, soon begot Wantonness. If we may take *Cicero's* word for it, Men derive their Manners, not so much from the Seed of their Parents, as from those things which

which are afforded by the nature of the Soil, and our manner of Living. The *Carthaginians* were not born deceitful and Liars, but made so by the Nature of the place; for by reason of the abundance of their Harbours, and their frequent Dealings with Merchants and Strangers, the desire of Gain put them upon the Art of tricking and cheating. The *Genoeses* inhabiting a Hilly Country, were hard and clownish; the very Nature of their Soil taught them this, which produces nothing but with much Cultivating and Labour. The *Campanians* were always proud, by reason of the great Fertility of their Land, the Plenty of Fruits, the Wholesomeness and Beauty of their City. From this Abundance and Superfluity of every thing, arose that Pride which disposed these People to demand of the ancient *Romans*, that one of the Consuls should be chosen out of *Capua*; and afterwards that Luxury which helped to ruine *Hannibal*, whom all the Difficulties and Fatigues of War could not conquer. *Cicero* argues after this rate, in his Oration *de lege Agrario*, delivered before the People against *Rullus*, and likewise in another, which he spoke in the Senate-house: He is utterly against the sending a Colony to that place, which by reason of the Fruitfulness of the Soil, and the Plenty of all things, is said to have begotten Pride and Cruelty. All which things exactly proved true in the Inhabitants of the Plain of *Jordan*, whose Soil, that we may observe this by the by, was not unlike that of the *Campanians*, which to this

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day abounds in Bitumen and Sulphur.

Now these People, as they were corrupted by Prosperity, so it seems Adversity made not the least Impression upon their Minds, or reform'd their Manners. Although they were conquer'd by the *Etymæans* and their Confederates, which Afflictions might have awaken'd a less flagitious People to a Sense of their Duty; yet it wrought not any good Effects upon these Debauchees, who, as soon as they were delivered out of Captivity, carried their old Customs and Vices home along with them. See the 14th Chapter of *Genesis*. Now the Sinfulness of these People did not only consist in this, that they were given to Uncleanliness and Lasciviousness, as appears from *Gen.* ch. 19. but in all manner of Wickedness. Certainly the Debauchery of that place could admit of no new Accessions, but was already arrived to its height, where they cou'd think of abusing Strangers after so abominable a manner. Therefore *Josephus* deservedly begins this History with the following words, 'The *Sodomites* waxing proud for their Riches and Wealth, grew contumelious towards Men, and impious towards God; so that they were wholly unmindful of the Favours they received from him. They hated Strangers, and burnt in mutual Lust with one another. Hence we see that in the Prophets the proverbial Appellation of wicked Men is that of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. Thus *Isaiab* calls the People of *Jerusalem*, ch. x. 10. *Hear the Word of the Lord, ye Pri-*

ces of Sodom, listen to the Law of your God, ye People of Gomorrah. See likewise Ezekiel 16. 46. & Seqq.

IV. And therefore the Divine Justice offended at these horrid Enormities, resolved utterly to destroy some Cities situated in the farthest part of the Plain of Jordan, which Moses relates to have been done in the following manner ;
*' The Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah
 ' Brimstone and Fire from the Lord out of Hea-
 ' ven, and he overthrew those Cities, and all the
 ' Plain, and all the Inhabitants of the Cities,
 ' and that which grew upon the ground, Gen. 19.*
 24, 25. We have already shown, that this whole Tract of Land was full of Bitumen, which as it will easily take fire, was soon kindled by the Lightning ; and the Flame was not only to be seen upon the Superficies of the Earth, which frequently happens in such places, without the Destruction of the Inhabitants, but so pierced into the Subterranean Veins of Brimstone and Bitumen, that that matter being destroyed, the whole Earth sunk down, and afforded a Receptacle to the Waters flowing thither. All which Particulars we will now endeavour to handle more copiously, and to illustrate by other Examples.

First, Though Moses only mentions two Cities which God destroy'd by Lightning, namely Sodom and Gomorrah, yet there were two more destroy'd at the same time, Adma and Zeboim, which lay near the two above-mentioned

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Cities, as appears from Chapter 14. 2. Nay, *Moses* himself affirms as much, *Deut.* 29. 23. where taking occasion to describe the Punishments with which God would visit the wicked *Israelites*, he tells them, that Strangers as they travelled that way should gaze upon their Lands, burnt up with Brimstone and Salt, in which there should be no sowing, nor should any thing grow, nor any Herb appear, as in the Destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Adma, and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his Anger and Wrath. See likewise *Hosea* 11. 8. Now the reason why these two last Cities were omitted, seems to be, because perhaps the Kings of these places were tributary to those of Sodom and Gomorrah. *Strabo* indeed in his sixteenth Book does not mention that only four Cities were subverted by this Subterranean Fire, but thirteen; but perhaps he might be deceived in this matter, as well as he was in believing that the *Lacus Serbonis* was the same with the *Asphaltites*. Perhaps to, nine other smaller Towns, which depended upon these four, were destroyed at the same time. 'Tis certain, that *Ezekiel* does not only make mention of Sodom but its Daughters, Chap. 16. that is, the Cities that were situate in the same Province; As I live, saith the Lord God to Jerusalem, thy Sister Sodom, and the Daughters thereof, (that is to say, the Cities which it had built around it, or else sent Colonies into) have not done as thou and thy Daughters have done. It may not improbably be supposed,

supposed, that *Strabo*, a Man of great Diligence, and infinite Reading, might have an account of the number of these Cities from some Writer of the *Phœnician* History.

Secondly, God is said to have rained down Fire and Brimstone from the Lord, which is a Periphrasis for Lightning, as in *Psalms* 9. ver. 6. He will rain Whirlwinds upon the Wicked, *Fire* and *Brimstone*; and *Ezekiel* 38. 22. I will punish him with Pestilence and Blood: a mighty Shower, Stones of Hail, *FIRE* and *BRIMSTONE*, will I rain down upon him. Now Thunder is therefore called *Fire* and *Brimstone*, which is as much as to say, Brimstone set on fire, and lighted. So in the third of *Genesis*, v. 16. we find *Pain* and *Conception*, that is Pain which follows Conception. He that is desirous to see more Examples of this nature, let him consult *H. Gratius* upon *John* 3. 5. But the reason why Thunder is thus described, no one certainly can be ignorant of, that has either smelt those places that have been struck by Thunder, or has read what Learned Men have writ upon this occasion. I will only give my self the trouble to set down two or three Testimonies. Thunder and Lightning likewise, says *Pliny*, *lib.* 35. c. 15. have the Smell of Brimstone, and the very Light or Flame of them is sulphureous. And *Seneca*, in the second Book of his *Natural Questions*, ch. 21. tells us, that all things that are struck by Lightning, have a sulphureous Smell. And indeed, our Natural Philosophers have plainly demonstra-

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ted, that the Thunderbolt is nothing else but a sulphureous Exhalation. For this *Perſus*, in his second Satire, calls it *Sulphus Sacrum* ;

*Ignoviſſe putas, quia cum tonet, ocyus illex,
Sulphure diſcutitur ſacro, quam tūq; domūſq;*

On the other hand, becauſe the Thunderbolt is of a Sulphureous nature, the Greeks ſeem to have called Brimſtone in their Language, θεῖον ; that is, *Divine*, by a proper name ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσὶν, becauſe it comes from God.

Now God is not barely ſaid to have rained down *Brimſtone and Fire*, but *Brimſtone and Fire from the Lord* ; where the Addition of *from the Lord*, which at firſt ſight may appear to be ſuperfluous, does more particularly deſcribe the Thunder-bolt, which by the *Hebrews* and other Nations is frequently called the *Fire of God*, and *Fire from God*. Thus in the ſecond Book of *Kings*, c. i. v. 12. *THE FIRE OF GOD came down from Heaven, and devoured him.* See likewiſe *Job* i. v. 16. *Iſaiab* uſes the ſame Expreſſion, c. 66. v. 16. *He ſhall be puniſhed with the FIRE OF THE LORD.* Alter this manner the Latin Poets ſpeaks, herein intimating the *Græcians* ; as *Ovid*. *Met.* l. 15.

*Jamq; opus exegi, quod nec Jovis ira, nec Ignes,
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetuſtas.*

Statius,

Statius, in the first Book of his *Thebais*;

*Illicet Igne Jovis, lapsisq; citatior astris,
Tristibus exiluit rigis.*

Because Men have no power over these kinds of Meteors, and 'tis impossible for them by any contrivance to ascend up to the Clouds, therefore God is supposed to dwell there, and to cast his Darts from thence: although he is equally present in all places, and does not send his Thunderbolts for any peculiar reason.

Thirdly, Though *Moses* does not inform us after what manner the Thunderbolts subverted these unhappy Cities, and the adjoining Territory, yet since he makes mention of them, we cannot comprehend how it happen'd any other-wise, than that the Thunderbolts falling in great plenty upon some Pits of Bitumen, the Veins of that combustible Matter took fire immediately, and as the Fire penetrated into the lowermost bowels of this bituminous Soil, these wicked Cities were subverted by a Tremor, and sinking down of the ground. We will not here enlarge how easily *Naphtha*, which is a sort of Liquid Bitumen, is set on fire. The Reader may at his leisure consult what *Strabo*, l. 16. *Plutarch* in the Life of *Alexander*, and *Pliny*, l. 2. c. 105. have said upon this Subject. Perhaps in some part of this delicious Plain which was overthrown, there was only the thick Bitumen, but even

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even the very Vapour of that Matter, which exhales from Grounds impregnated with it, is easily set on fire. *In Lycia the Hephæstian Mountains if you do but touch them with a lighted Torch, immediately take fire, so that the very Stones in the Rivers, and the Sands in the Water burn. If you take a Stick out of these Waters, and draw Furrows upon the ground with it, according to the common report, a track of Fire follows it.* These are Pliny's words, l. 2. c. 106. There is a small Hill in the Province belonging to *Grenoble*, from whence a Smoke of a Bituminous Smell is perpetually seen to proceed: Now this Smoke by a lighted Flambeau, or Chaff, is soon set on fire, which we our selves knew to be true by Ocular Experience.

In that lamentable Earthquake, which in the Month of *January* 1693. shook all *Sicily* after so prodigious and miserable a manner, some Authors of very good credit have assured us, that Thunderbolts fell in several places of the Island. And this Observation is not unknown to the Ancients; for *Seneca, Quæst. Nat. l. 2. c. 30.* says, *Ætna* has sometimes burnt exceedingly, and thrown up a wonderful quantity of burning Sand, the day obscur'd by the Smoke and Ashes, so that the People were terrified at so unexpected a Scene of Darkness. At these times, as the common Tradition goes, there is a great deal of Thunder and Lightning.

And therefore the Bitumen which is so plentifully found in the Soil of *Sodom*, might be set

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on fire by a Thunderbolt; and since it flows, or is dug not from the Superficies of the Earth, but from Veins of a mighty depth, when once it had taken fire the Flame must of necessity run along all those Veins, and at last shake and subvert the ground. The same thing frequently happens to the Fields about *Ætna* and *Vesuvius*, for the very same reason. Innumerable Authors have written of the Soil of *Sicily*, but *Justin* shall serve for all, who in the beginning of the fourth Book thus describes it. The Earth is naturally thin and friable, and by reason of the several Caverns and Pipes, so penetrable, that the greatest part of it is exposed to the violence of the Winds. Nay, the Genius of the Soil is proper for generating and nourishing of Fire, because it is said to be crusted within with Sulphur and Bitumen, which is the reason, that when the Wind struggles with the Fire under ground, it frequently belches out sometimes Flames, sometimes Vapours, and sometimes Smoke, and that in several places. *Cornelius Severus* prosecutes this Argument at large in his Poem, intituled, *Ætna*. The same Observations have been made of the Grounds that lye about the *Vesuvius* in the Kingdom of *Naples*, and several Towns have frequently been there overthrown by Earthquakes. *Pliny* the Younger in the 16th Epistle, l. 6. where he relates the Death of his Learned Uncle, who was suffocated as he approached too near the fire of that Mountain. The Houses, says he, with frequent and prodigious Tremblings nodded,

nodded, and as if they had been removed from their Foundation, seemed to move this way and that way. And *Seneca* in the sixth Book of his Natural Questions, *cb. 1.* has the following Passage. *We are told that Pompeii, a famous City of Campania, was subverted by an Earthquake.* — This

Concussion happen'd on the * *Nones* of *February*, under the Consulate of *Regulus* and *Virginus*, and occasioned incredible losses in *Campania*; which though it was never free from these Motions, yet it seldom suffer'd by them.

That which *Seneca* tells us happen'd to the City of *Pompeii*, do we say was the very same Calamity which visited these Cities in the Plain of *Jordan*. Nor was this the first time that this Valley was shaken, as the Territory about *Pompeii* was not subverted the very first time it shook, as the *Jewish* Authors affirm, from whom *St. Jerom* has borrowed what follows in his *Hebrew* Traditions. *It is frequently asked, says he, why Lot, after he had first prefer'd Segor to his flight up the Mountain, that he desired it might escape because he design'd to live there, should so soon alter his Mind, and depart from Segor to the Mountain? We answer, that the Conjecture of the Hebrews concerning Segor is agreeable to the Truth, viz. that it was frequently overthrown by Earthquakes, and was first called Bale, and afterwards Saltilla: and therefore Lot was afraid, and said to himself, If while the other Cities were standing, this was often subverted, how can it now expect*

expect to escape in the common ruine? But to lay aside these uncertain Traditions, we will rather observe in the words of the *Roman* Philosopher, that God punished the *Sodomites* and their Neighbours, by a Calamity of a large extent, which has not only destroy'd single Houses, or Families, or Cities, but whole Nations, which sometimes buries all in Ruines, and sometimes in a *deep Gulf*, leaving no Remainders behind it. By which it may appear, that that which is not now, was formerly, but triumphs over the most magnificent Cities, and is not so merciful as to leave any footsteps of their ancient Glory.

Strabo in his first, and *Pliny* in his second Book, will furnish us with several Examples of this nature; some few of which, nearly resembling the Destruction of these Cities situate in the Plain of *Jordan*, we have here selected. The former Author tells us out of *Posidonius*, p. 40. that in *Phœnicia* a certain City, situate above *Sidon*, was absorpt by an Earthquake. Out of *Demetrius Scephus*, that several Earthquakes have happen'd in *Asia Minor*, by which whole Towns were devoured, and the Mountain *Sipylus* overthrown under the Reign of *Tantalus*, and *Marishes* turned into standing Lakes. And this happen'd at the Destruction of the Vale of *Sodom*, where the *Lacus Asphaltites* was occasion'd by the Water which there overflowed. Nor indeed cou'd it otherwise happen, the Soil easily giving way in marshy places. As the same Author tells us, p. 37. Great as well as small things

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things may be swallowed up, since Chasms in the Earth, and the burying of Towns and Habitations, as it happen'd at *Bara*, *Bezona*, and several other places, are said to be caused by Earthquakes. *Pliny* in his second Book, *cb.* 88. testifies, that the Mountain *Epopos*, a Fire on the sudden breaking out of it, was levell'd to the Ground, and a Town buried in the Deep. For the Arch, that supported the Ground, breaking in, and the Matter underneath being wholly consumed, the Soil above must of necessity sink, and be swallowed up in these Caverns, if they are of a larger extent. For this reason 'twas suppos'd in *Seneca's* time that the Mountain *Ætna* consumed, and sunk by degrees, because the Sailors cou'd have discern'd it farther off in former times. See his 79th Epistle.

V. After this Territory adjoining to *Jordan* had thus sunk in, it must unavoidably fall out, (as we said before) that the Waters running to this place in so great an abundance must make a Lake of that place, which was marshy before; as *Moses* informs us, *Gen.* 14. 3. when he relates that the Forces of the Inhabitants near *Jordan* met in the Valley of *Siddim*, which is now, says he, the Salt Sea; by which name, as we shall hereafter observe, the *Lacus Asphaltites* was called. And that this was not the only place, where a Lake was occasioned by an Earthquake, we find from the above-mentioned Passage in *Strabo*. Nay, *Pliny* testifies that in one of the *Pythecusæ* not only a Town was swallowed up in the

the Deep, (as we have already observed) but that by another Concussion of the Earth a Pool broke out. In the beginning of 1693, all *Sicily* was miserably shaken; and not only several Towns overturned, but the City *Augusta*, which was built by the Emperor *Frederic* in the Year 1229. was wholly swallowed up by the Sea.

If to these Waters perpetually running into it, we add the Bitumen which at once broke out of the Earth, and mingled with the Water, we shall have a full Description of the *Lacus Asphaltites*. We have evidently shown, that all that Country abounded with Bitumen before; and perhaps what *Strabo* affirms to have happen'd at *Eubæa*, fell out here, which did not cease to feel Shakings in one part or another, that the Earth open'd in the Field of *Lelantus*, and vomited forth a Flood of fiery Mud.

After this manner the *Lacus Asphaltites* seems to be made, and nothing can be objected against it, unless it be that *Abraham* did not perceive the Earthquake, which we say happen'd in this place. For *Moses* tells us, *Gen.* 19. 27. that he knew nothing of the matter, till he got up in the Morning, and went to the Mountains; from whence he saw the Smoke arise from the Earth, as from a Furnace. But besides that, *Moses* no where denies that *Abraham* was sensible of this Earthquake; it might very well be, that the Trembling was very inconsiderable, or none at all in the Neighbourhood. Often small Tracts of Ground are disturbed, as *Seneca* has observed, *Quest. Nat.* l. 6.

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l. 6. c. 25. even this Earthquake which has filled the City with so many dreadful Stones, did not exceed the limits of Campania. Why should I mention that when Chalcis trembled, Thebes stood unmolested; that when Ægium was every moment expecting to be buried in ruins, the City Patrae, which stands so near it, felt nothing of that Motion? That prodigious Concussion which overwhelm'd two Cities, Buris and Helice, stoop on this side of Ægium? 'Tis therefore a plain case, that the Motion only goes so far, and no farther, as the Caverns and vacant spaces in the Earth, give it leave. According to the Depth or Breadth of the Caverns which fell in, the Motion must be heard farther or nearer. Now these Caverns seem neither to have been very far from the Superficies of the Earth, nor broader than the Valley which sunk in, since four Cities, with the Territories belonging to them, were so soon swallowed up, and yet the Calamity spread no farther.

The Memory of this strange Event was not only preserv'd among the *Hebrews*, who afterward inhabited the neighbouring Country, but was propagated among the *Heathens*. *Strabo* indeed, *l. 16.* erroneously confounds this Lake with *Sirbonis*, but in the other part of his relation deserves to be heard. It is a vast Lake, the Compass of which some Persons estimate to be a thousand Furlongs, the Length of it above two hundred; (*Josephus de Bell. Jud. l. 4. c. 26.* tells us it is 580 Furlongs in Length, and 150 in Breadth;) the Water of it is extremely deep
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and heavy; upon which account divers are of no use there; for whoever goes into it as high as his Navil, is immediately lifted up. It is full of Bitumen, which at uncertain Seasons boils up from the bottom, with Bubbles like hot Water, and then the Superficies of the Lake swells, and resembles the rising of a Hill. It emits vast quantities of smoaky Ashes, that deodor the Eye sight; it immediately rusts Silver and Brass, and in short, every thing that looks bright and polished, except Gold alone. When their Utensils grow rusty, the Inhabitants know that an Eruption of Bitumen will soon happen, for which reason they go in flat-bottom'd Boats made of Reeds to gather it. Bitumen is a sort of Earth, which being melted by the Heat spreads mightily, but with a little cold Water is soon condensed again into a solid Body, and therefore needs Incision. — Several other Signs convince us that in the Soil of this Country there is actual Fire, for they shew us rough Rocks burnt up near *Mofais*, and Caverns wrought out in several places, the Earth full of Ashes, drops of Pitch distilling from the Rocks, the Rivers hot, and casting forth an unsavory Smell, and their Houses frequently thrown down; so that what the Natives of the place relate, may very well be credited, viz. that thirteen Cities were formerly inhabited in this Tract of Ground, the Metropolis of which, *Sodom* has still the compass of sixty Furlongs visibly remaining, that by Earthquakes, together with violent Eruptions of Fire, and hot bitumi-

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nous sulphurous Water, a great Lake was made, that the Stones took fire, that some of the Cities were swallowed up, and others abandoned by the Inhabitants that cou'd make their escapes. *Erasmus*, on the other hand, was of opinion, that the Country was overwhelm'd by store of subterranean Pools. We will now introduce *Tacitus* to confirm what has been delivered by *Strabo*, who tells us in the fifth Book of his History, ch. 6. *A Lake of a mighty compass, resembling a Sea, but of a more odious taste; and for the noisomeness of the Smells that proceed from it, often fatal to the Inhabitants: It is neither agitated by the Wind, nor does it harbour any Fish, or Fowl accustomed to the Water. At certain seasons of the Year it throws up Bitumen, the use of gathering which, Experience has taught, as it has done other Arts.*—— Not far from thence are *Fields*, which they report to have been extremely fruitful in former times, and inhabited by large and populous Cities, but afterwards were set on fire by Thunder bolts, the Footsteps of which Calamity are still remaining; but that the Earth, which seems to be parch'd and burnt up, has wholly lost its fertility. For every thing, whether it grows Spontaneously, or is planted by Man, whether Herb or Flower, or arrived to full maturity, if compress'd, moulders away immediately into Ashes. Therefore as I readily grant, that some famous Cities were here destroy'd by Lightning in times past, so I suppose, that the Earth is infected by Steams from the Lake, and

and the circum-ambient Air corrupted, which putrifies the Fruits of the Earth. This Lake likewise, has been described by *Diodorus Siculus*, l. 19. by *Pliny*, l. 5. c. 16. and by *Solinus*, c. 36. whom the Reader, if he thinks fit, may consult when he pleases. We will not here examine the particulars they relate, altho' we make no question, but that abundance of false Reports have been utter'd upon this Subject. We will only enquire into the Reasons of the several Names it goes by, with all convenient brevity.

Every one knows wherefore it received the name of *Asphaltites*, since it so plentifully abounds in *Asphaltus*, or *Bitumen*; and the reason, why it is frequently called the *Salt Sea* in Scripture, is, because the *Hebrews* call all Lakes, *Seas*; and because two other Lakes, *viz.* that of *Semechon* and *Genesareth* receive the River *Jordan*, in his passage above, both which are fresh Water, therefore this third, to be distinguished from them, was called the *Salt Sea*. Otherwise the Mediterranean Sea is likewise salt; altho' 'tis certain, there is some difference in the saltness. In succeeding times, it was called the *Dead Sea*, not because the Water of it is immoveable, as *Justin* pretends, l. 36. 3. but because, as *Josephus* informs us, it is *ayaw*, that is, it has no Fish in it. The above-mentioned Writers, that give a Description of this Lake, confirm the opinion of *Josephus*, to whom we will add two Eye-witnesses: First, *Pausa-*

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nias, who in his fifth Book expressly tells us, he saw the River *Jordan*, which runs thro' the Lake of *Tiberias*, fall into another Lake, called the *Dead Sea*, by whom it is consumed; and afterwards adds, *This Lake is void of Fish, who turn back to their accustomed Waters, as from a manifest Danger.* The Second is, *St. Jerome*, who upon the 47th Chapter of *Ezekiel*: If *Jordan*, says he, swelled by the Rains, carries any fishes into it, they immediately die, and float upon the surface of the fat Water.

VI. So much concerning the Lake. Now let us proceed to say something of its Banks, and the circumjacent Country; besides what we have already related of it by the by. *Josephus*, speaking of the Territory about *Sodom*, thus expresses himself: Near this Lake, says he, is *Sodomitis*, formerly a delicious and fertile Land, and famous for the Riches of its Cities, but now wholly burnt up. After this he goes on in the following words; so that you'd rather think, that *Tacitus*, or any Pagan Author spoke, rather than *Josephus*. The Reports run, That for the wickedness of the Inhabitants it was destroy'd by Thunderbolts. Indeed the remainders of the Divine Fire, and the Resemblance of five Cities, are still to be seen; the sight of which, gives credit to the Stories that are told of the Country about *Sodom*. After the same manner, *Philo*, towards the end of his second Book, concerning the Life of *Moses*. The Monuments of that unspeakable Destruction,

Eden, are to this day shown in Syria; Ruines, Athes, Brimstone, Smoak, and a slender small Flame still breaking forth, certain indications of Fire.

St. Jude, in the 7th. verse of his Epistle, seems to have his Eye upon this, where he says, that *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the neighbouring Cities, are proposed as a Spectacle, bearing the punishment of everlasting Fire. This Fire, which for so many Ages was fed by the Bituminous Matter, and perhaps still continues, is called *αἰώνιος*. Thus *Pliny*, l. 2. c. 106. says, That the Mountain *Chimera* in *Phaselis*, burns Night and Day with an *IMMORTAL* Flame; after *Ctesias*, who had used the word *αἰώνιος*, of the same signification in Greek. *Diogenes Laertius*, l. 8. § 75. Thus speaks to *Empedocles*, who is reported to have thrown himself headlong into *Ætna*.

Πῆς δὲ Κενθῆων ἐκπῆς ΑΘΑΝΑΤΩΝ

Thou hast drunk Fire out of immortal Cups.

Learned Men are mistaken, who imagine, that this fire which burnt down the Cities of this famous Valley, was therefore called *ahénié*, because 'tis a Figure of Eternity; or because it was not extinguished till it had destroy'd every thing; for it flamed long after that, and both Interpretations are unnatural. Nor is that incomparable Man Dr. *Hammond*, happier in his

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Conjecture than the rest, who is of opinion, that the eternal Pains of Hell are here signified; as likewise in *Matth.* 18. 8. and several other places of Scripture. In the first place he tells us, that *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, are here put for the Inhabitants of those Cities. Secondly, he observes, that a present Punishment is meant here; since the Apostle says, *περὶ ὧν τὰς δειγμα*, they are proposed as a Spectacle, altho he had used the Præterperfect Tense before; from whence he concludes, that we are to understand this of the Damned in Hell, for as much as the other Fire was past and gone. However, the Monuments of that Punishment, as we have already taken notice, still continued; nor cou'd the *Sodomites* be said *περὶ οὐκ ἔδειξαν δειγμα*, to be proposed as a Spectacle, *qui delinquent non poterant*, i. e. who cou'd not be shewn. Therefore our Interpretation is the most simple and agreeable to the Words; which being allowed, we may still say, that the Punishment of Cities destroy'd, are still left to be seen by us. *Brocardus* indeed, in his Description of the Holy Land, Part the first, *cb.* 7. § 25. The Dead Sea, says he, is always smoaking, and dusky like the mouth of Hell, as I have beheld it with my own eyes, by reason of the noisome Vapours that proceed from it. The Author of the Poem concerning *Sodom*, seems to have thought of the same thing, for he concludes it with these Verses.

He

*Ha Sodomum & Gomorrah signata in secula
paua*

Gentibus injustis, quæ pectora dura timorem

Deservere Dei, de Cælo jura tuero

Inq; unum Dominum rerum spectare docebunt.

The adjoining Country which escaped the waters of the *Lacus Asphaltites*, was, as *Moses* calls it, *Deut. 19. 23.* Brimstone, Salt and Combustion; that is to say, burnt up with a sulphureous Fire, and changed into a Salt, and consequently a barren Soil. The Holy Writers, when they wou'd terrifie Sinners with the most horrible Punishments, are used to compare them with those of the Sodomites; see *Isaiah 13. 19.* and *c. 34. 10.* *Jeremiah 20. 16.* and *c. 50. 40.* *Lamentations 4. 6.* *Ezekiel 16. 49.* *Hosea 11. 8.* *Amos 4. 11.* *St. Luke 17. 29.* *St. Peter Ep. 2. c. 2. 6.* They seem likewise to allude to this, or rather use Expressions borrowed from hence, when they describe the Torments of the other World, under the representation of eternal Fire, of Smoke ascending for ever, of a Lake burning with Fire and Brimstone; as *Revelations, c. 14. v. 10, 11. c. 21. 8.* Likewise the Heathen Poets, because perhaps they looked upon these vulcano's or fiery Mountains, to be as it were the Chimnies of Hell, feigned, that these were Rivers of burning Brimstone in the Regions below.

VII. But to omit a farther disquisition of this matter, because it requires a larger Volume; we shall rather chuse to observe, That several circumstances of a Fable in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, l. 8. seem to derive their Original from this History; as, 1. *Jupiter* and *Mercury*, like the two Angels in this Story, put on human Shape, and travel among men. 2. They meet with very barbarous, inhospitable Men, just as among the *Sodomites*, they shewed no manner of respect to Strangers.

Jupiter hic specie mortali, cumq; parente

Venit Atlantides positu caducifer alu,

Mille domos adiere, locum requiemq; petentes,

Mille domas claufere seræ.

3. *Tamen una recepit.* But one House at last received them; and so *Lot* gave a Lodging to the Angels, who must otherwise have passed the Night in the Streets. 4. At last *Jupiter* and *Mercury* confess themselves to be Gods, and threaten to punish the Neighbourhood. So do the two Angels,

Diis sumus, meritasq; dabit vicinia pœnas

Impla,

5. These Deities save *Baucis* and *Philemon*, as the Angels doe *Lot* and his Family.

Vobis

*Vobis immunibus hujus
Esse mali dabitur*

6. *Bancus* and *Philemon* escape by leaving their House, and following the Gods to a Mountain, after the same manner as *Lot* and his Daughters.

*Modo vestrar elinquitte tecta
Ac nostras comitate gradus, Et in ardua montis
Ite simul.*

7. The Neighbours of *Bancus* and *Philemon* are punished, their Town turned into a Pool of standing Water, as the Valley of *Siddim* became a Lake.

*Tellus habitabilis olim
Nunc celebres mergis, fulicisq; palustribus undæ.*

8. The Scene of this surprising Event, *Ovid* lays *ad phrygios colles*, in the Hills of *Phrygia*, but does not mark out the place more distinctly: Perhaps he had somewhere read, that it happened *αὐτὰρ ἐν φρυγίᾳ*, by which name, part of *Phrygia* is called. Nay, the very name *Phrygia*, is derived *φρυγία*, from Roasting or Burning. Therefore the Country about *Sodom*, may as well be meant by both Apellations, as that Region in *Asia Minor*, as sufficiently appears by what has been already said; but *Ovid*, according

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according to the custom of Poets, puts down a better known name, instead of one that was less known. We might easily make a Parallel between that part of *Phrygia*, and the Country about *Sodom*, and shew wherein they agree, as any one will soon find out, who will attentively consider what *Strabo*, l. 13. has written, *περὶ τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἀσσυρίαν*, but we have not time to discuss this matter more prolixly.

Altho' I am not of the opinion of some Learned Men, who suppose, that all the Fables of the *Grecians* are derived from Histories in the Bible, changed and corrupted: yet the concurrence of so many Circumstances, inclined me to believe, that the History of *Lot*, is in some manner shadowed in the Fable of *Baucis* and *Philemon*. We have shown in our Annotations upon *Gen. c. 18. v. 1*. That something like this, might have happen'd in the Fable of *Orion*; and indeed 'tis reasonable to imagine, that the *Phenicians*, relating to the *Greeks*, things done in the Land of *Canaan*, partly mingled them with some Additions of their own; and partly might be misunderstood by the *Greeks* who had Vanity enough to adorn whatever they heard, with new fictions of their own Invention; which is the reason, that the footsteps of Truth can scarce be traced in their Fables; altho' they arose from true Histories. Consult our Observations upon *ch. 9. 20.*

From this Conflagration of *Sodom*, the Author of the small Poem, *De Sodomis*, pretends the Fable of *Phaethon* arose.

Hinc

*Hinc habet in falso de vero fabula famam
Solis progeniem currus optasse paternos,
Nec valuisse levem puerum frænare superbos
Iguis equos, arsisse orbem, tunc fulmine raptum
Aurigam.*

But as there is no manner of likeness between this History and that Fable, save only, that single Circumstance of Burning, one cannot affirm any thing on this occasion. Others, with more probability, find some resembling footsteps of this History in the Fable of *Typhæus*, and therefore we will in a few words, lay down their Opinion, with the Arguments they bring to support it, 1. The name of *Typhæus*, may be deduced from the *Chaldee*, *Radix, Toph*, which signifies to overflow; and therefore will be the same as *Tipho*, i. e. one overflown; which name well enough fits the men that were drowned in the *Lacus Asphaltites*. 2. This same *Typhæus*, whether a Man, or a Monster, was an Enemy, both of Gods and Men, as the *Sodomites* and their Neighbours were. See *Homer's* Hymn upon *Apollo*, and *Hesiod's Theogonia*. 3. The beds of *Typhæus*, are said by *Homer*, *Il.* 2. to be in *Ægeus*, that is, in *Armenia* or *Syria*: for which, consult the Interpreters upon *Steph. Byzant.* upon the word *Ægeus*. 4. *Lycophron* in his *Cassandra*, p. 137. *Ed. Steph.* places the seat of his Wife in a Lake, which seems to have a respect to the *Lacus Asphaltites*. 5. He

5. He was slain by *Jupiter* with a Thunder-bolt, which *Homer*, in the place above cited, and *Hesiod*, in his *Theogonia*, describe after such a manner, that they may seem to relate to the Conflagration of *Sodom*: consult the latter, from v. 840. to v. 867. 6. In the very place where *Typhæus* is said to be overcome, and killed by *Jupiter*, Fire and Smoak is reported to break forth, which (as we have already observed) agrees with the the Country about *Sodom*. 'Tis true, both the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets have added several things to this Fable, and not knowing where to place the *Ægeon*, mentioned by *Homer*, strangely disagree from one another, as to that particular especially, but agree in those Circumstances we have here taken notice of.

VIII. Since it is most probable, that these Cities of the Plain of *Jordan*, were overthrown in the same manner, as we have related it: However, some inquisitive Reader may be still inclined to ask, whether we suppose the Ground was burnt and subverted by Miracle, or only by the common methods of Nature. *Seneca* was of opinion, that the Gods never concerned themselves in any thing of this kind; and that the disorders of Heaven nor Earth, were occasioned by the anger of the Deities. These things, says he, are produced by their own Causes; neither do they rage, because they are commanded so to do, but when they are disturbed, it proceeds from some failing or irregularity, as it happens with human Bodies:

and then, when they chiefly seem to give an injury, they receive one. But to us, who are ignorant of the true Cause, every thing appears frightful, and our apprehensions are increased by the rarity of them. But to lay aside Rhetorical Figures, which only amuse and deceive ignorant People; the thing itself, if we consider it divested of all Circumstances, does not seem to exceed the ordinary power of Nature, as we have sufficiently demonstrated from several Instances of Earthquakes. In a Soil, impregnated with Bitumen, which is above, may be shaken and swallowed up with a sudden hiatus. Thunder-bolts too may fall, and set the veins of Sulphur and Bitumen on fire, which afterwards breaking out, and mingled with the Water, may in a low Valley, easily cause a Lake full of Asphaltus. But if these things were done before the natural Causes were in a disposition to produce this Effect; and had not happened at that instant, unless it had been for some extraordinary Intervention of God, or his Angels; it ought to be no less reputed a Miracle, than if every particular in the Transaction, plainly surpassed the usual order of Nature. And that the business happened after this manner, the two Angels dispatched by God Almighty, upon this important occasion, and their Discourses are Arguments sufficiently convincing. Nay, one of the Angels seems to have intimated this, who, before the thing happened, foretold it to Abraham, as we have observed

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observed in our Paraphrase of the 18. ch. of Genesis, and the 19. ver.

Dissertation X.

Concerning the Statue of Salt.

I. *The Original of the Opinion, that Lot's Wife was changed into a Pillar of Salt, came from the Jews.* II. *This Opinion cannot be made out from the words of Moses.* III. *The absurdity of it.* IV. *The Patrons of it are not to be relid on, since they can bring no Reasons to support it.* V. *A Solution of the Arguments, usually urged in behalf of the common Opinion.* VI. *That Lot's Wife either died of fear, or else was suffocated by some pestilential Vapour.* VII. *That the Fables of Niobe and Medusa, arose from such Expressions, as Moses useth in this place, which is confirm'd by the Example of the Fable of the Harpies.* VIII. *Whether Hoc est corpus meum, does not resemble the Mosaical Narration, as they have been already compar'd by some Persons.*

HAVING described the burning of Sodom, and the neighbouring Towns, more accurately, than the common Interpreters are used to do; I think it not amiss, to examine the

the celebrated *Metamorphosis* of Lot's Wife; For, as we have demonstrated in the foregoing Dissertation, that those Cities situated near Jordan, were by an unusual divine Power, overwhelmed and buried in Ruins; so, on the other hand, we hope we shall be able to convince every unprejudiced Reader in this; that some persons, out of too fond a regard to Miracles, by misunderstanding the words of the Holy Scriptures, have improv'd an event, which we own to be somewhat uncommon, into a mighty Prodigy. The Jews, who were always a people so sottishly abandon'd to the belief of Miracles, that not being content with the Truth, they trump up a Thousand other Legends absurd, of which the Bible makes not the least mention, seem to have misled the Christians into this Error; and they, by following their blind Guides with too implicit a Resignation, imagin'd after the Jews, that Lot's Wife was turn'd into a Pillar of Salt; tho' so wonderful a Change, cannot certainly be deduced from the words of Moses. Josephus relating this History, in the first Book of his Jewish Antiquities, ch. 12. ἡ δὲ Λοτῶν γυνὴ, says he, πρὸς τὸ ἀναχθῆναι, εἰς τὸ πάλιν συνερχοῦς ἀναστραφέντη, καὶ πολυπράγμων οὖσα τὸ πρὸς αὐτὴν, ἀπὸ τοῦ Λοτῶν τῷ Θεῷ ταῦτα ποιεῖν, εἰς σῆλιν αὐτῶν μετέαλιν ἰσχυρὰ δὲ αὐτὴν, ἔτι καὶ νῦν διαμένει. But Lot's Wife in her flight, casting her eyes perpetually back upon the City, and being too much concern'd about it, tho' God had expressly forbid her

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to do so; was turn'd into a Pillar of Salt: I have beheld it my self, and it continues to this Day. Josephus's Country-men are of the same Opinion, and particularly the Author of the *Jerusalem Paraphrase*, where we read, that *Lot's Wife*, because she was a Native of *Sodom*, turn'd her head to see what became of her Father's House, and was made a Pillar of Salt, till the time of the Resurrection. The same account of the matter, is to be found in *Jonathan*.

II. Let us for a while, lay aside their Authority, of which we shall treat hereafter; and examine *Moses's* words, which gave occasion to this Opinion. *Lot's Wife*, says he, who followed him, looked back, *Vattbebi utfib melabb*, and became a Pillar of Salt. Now here we find two words of a doubtful Signification, which being ill understood, were accidentally the causes of this Error. *וַתִּבֶּה* and *נָצִיב*.

The first of them in this place, may properly signifie two things, 1. A heap, such for instance, as were erected to preserve the Memory of any remarkable Accident, such as *Laban* and *Jacob* rais'd in the Mountain *Galaad*, as we find in *Gen. ch. 31*. Such a heap is call'd *Mattsebah*, a word of near affinity to this, which signifies any thing that is rais'd up. For This reason, *D. Kimchi* seems to interpret it *in tal*, and upon this consideration, perhaps, or from the relation of those persons, who said, they had seen it, *Sulpitius Severus*, supposes *Lot's Wife* to be turned into a heap of Stones. They were

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were forbidden (these are his words) to look behind them, but the Woman not regarding this prohibition, as 'tis the infirmity of human Nature to long more earnestly after forbidden things, turned back her Eyes, and is reported to have been immediately changed into a Heap. 2. It may signifie a Statue or Pillar: The LXX Interpreters have Translated it, *στήλη αλάς*, a Pillar of Salt, *St. Jerome* a Statue, and *Onkelos* the same. From which Ambiguity of the Words it has happen'd, that some wou'd have *Lot's Wife* turn'd into a Pillar, without the resemblance of a feminine Shape, but others understand it to have been the Statue of a Woman, wherein all her Liniaments were plainly to be seen, as we shall observe hereafter.

But besides these proper Significations, the word נציב may in a figurative Sense, be applied to signifie something *immoveable* and *hard* like a Pillar, or Statue; whence the word נציבה, *Nitsbelha* in *Chaldee*, signifie *Hardness*, *Dan. 2. 41.* Nay the word נציב, signifies a *Garrison* or *Station* of Soldiers, because Centinels continue always in the same Post, see *1 Sam. 13. 3.* Therefore this may be the meaning of *Moses*, that *Lot's Wife* grew stiff, and remain'd there motionless, like a Pillar or Statue; as we shall more fully prove anon. Thus in common Conversation we are use to compare stupid Men, that are gazing at any thing long in the same posture of Body, to Statues. *Philo* in his *Book de Profugis*, where he interprets this Hi-

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story in an Allegorical manner, not Unelo-
gantly, uses the word *στυπύδα*, in a Me-
taphorical Sense: He says, that those who leave
the things before them, and turn their necks,
ὡς τὸ πρῶτον, behind them, *ἀλόχε ὡς Κερὴς λίθου*
τέρας στυπύδα, become Pillars, like an in-
animate and mute Stone. He has the same Ex-
pression in his Book *de Somniis*, and says of a
Man that neglects his Soul, and only minds his
Body, *ἀλόχε ἀνακρίσειται εἴλην περὶ ἐαυτοῦ κα-*
ταρρέσει, he will stand like an inanimate Pillar
which is consumed of it self.

The other word *מֶלַח* *Melakh*, besides its
common signification of Salt properly so
called, has two other meanings in Scripture.
Sometimes it signifies a salt and barren Soil,
like that about the *Lacus Asphaltites*, as we
find in *Moses*, *Deut.* 29. 23. All his Land shall
be Brimstone, Salt and Combustion, it shall not
be sown, nor yield Fruit, nor shall any Herb
grow therein, as in the Destruction of *Sodom*,
Ctc. In other places this sort of Soil is called
Melcha, as *Psalms* 107. 34. and the LXX Inter-
preters render it by *ἀλμυρὴ* or *ἀλμη*: in which
Sense, if it is here understood, the Prepositi-
on *καὶ* (which is frequently left out, as *Gen.* 24.
23. *Psal.* 2. 12.) is wanting, and then it will
run thus, *And she was a Statue*, or in other He-
brew words, *they stood* or *remained a Statue in a*
saltrish Soil. Sometimes it signifies a long space
of time, as in *Numb.* 17. 19. This shall be a
Covenant of Salt, or an everlasting Covenant.

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to thee. We meet the same Expression, 2 Chron. 13. 5. Now Salt seems to be a symbol of Eternity, because things that are season'd with it, continue incorrupt for many Years; which perhaps is the reason why this word is used to signify duration of time. And if this signification may be admitted, *Lot's Wife* may be understood to have continued always in the Country of *Sodom*, or there to have been benumb'd, and never to have return'd back.

Thus we see there is nothing in *Moses's* words which obliges us to suppose, that any unusual *Metamorphosis* happen'd in this case, in order to find out any meaning in them; and yet we ought not to have recourse to this sorry shift, unless after a diligent inquiry into the Signification of his Words, we were convinced they cou'd bear no other meaning: For since those Prodigies, which are above the power of Nature, very rarely happen, in comparison of those that may be effected by it, we ought seldom to admit of any Miracle in the Interpretation of Scripture, unless there be an urgent occasion for it.

III. When God is pleas'd to work any Miracle, that is, something which cannot be done according to the Rules of Nature, as they were at first establish'd; there is some important Reason, why the All-wise Governour of the Universe neglects the Laws of Nature, and makes use of his infinite Prerogative; because it is by no means consistent with his Wisdom, frequent-

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ly to break that Order for trivial Causes, which he at the Creation instituted with the highest Reason. Now if we carefully examine this wonderful *Metamorphosis* of *Lot's Wife*, we shall find nothing in this whole affair that seems to deserve so great a Miracle. 'Twas enough that this indiscreet Woman was punished by Death for her Dilatoriness; nor did the Angels threaten to inflict any thing beyond this, *save thy life*, said he, *and don't look behind thee, nor tarry in the Plain, but fly to the Mountain, lest thou should'st perish*. Nor was there the least necessity for a Miracle to destroy her, as we shall presently demonstrate.

Besides, Who can digest this absurd turning of her into Salt? where any thing of this nature is related in Scripture, there are evident convincing Reasons, why such and such Miracles, and no other, should be wrought. A Man of the meanest capacity knows why *Moses's Rod* was changed into a Serpent, and *Water* into *Wine*, at the Marriage in *Cana*. But here, if we were to resign our Faith up blindly to the Interpreters, a strange and sudden Change is wrought for no reason at all; for I wou'd willingly be inform'd, why *Lot's Wife* was rather turn'd into Salt, than into a Stone.

Some People pretend this was done, because the Earth itself being converted into Salt, as *Moses* informs us, *Deut. 29.* emitted a saline Vapour, which penetrating the flesh of the Woman, she was immediately turn'd into Salt.

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But those that have diligently examin'd the nature of Salt tell us, that this terrestrial Salt is *fixt*, as the Chymists express it; that is, does not spend itself in Vapours. Nevertheless, shou'd we grant what they so confidently affirm, yet a human Body, tho' it were never so much impregnated with those Vapours, wou'd not on the sudden be changed into Salt. Besides, tho' the Earth where *Lot's Wife* perished, is said to be Salt, yet it abounds in a far greater quantity of Bitumen and Brimstone; so that if she were to be changed into some Matter of near affinity with that Earth, she might much more conveniently have been turn'd into a Fountain of Bitumen or Brimstone.

Others, in which number we find *Clem. Alexandrinus*, give us a mystical Reason why she was turn'd into Salt. *Lot's Wife*, says he, who of her own accord alone relapsed to the vices of the World, he left senseless, and made her as it were a Stone of Salt, and commanded her to go no farther: No insipid, or unprofitable Image, but to season and whet up those who have a Spritual Discernment; *Strom. lib. 2. p. 387.* We meet with the same strain of Reasoning in *St. Austin, de Civ. Dei. lib. 16. c. 3.* But any one may see how far fetched and Oratorical this sort of Argumentation is, it may serve well enough for the Pulpit, or a popular Harangue, but can never satisfie a Philosophical Ear, which is not to be imposed upon by such miserable Rhetorick.

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Aben Ezra is of opinion, that *Lot's Wife* was burnt by Fire, which had some Salt mixt with it, so that she was as it were seasoned by that Salt; and he endeavours to prove that Salt fell down from Heaven with the Fire, which was likewise the sentiment of *H. Grotius*, from *Deut.* 29. v. 22. But *Moses* speaks not a syllable of any Salt falling down from Heaven, neither can it be deduced from his words, as any considering Reader will soon discover, or might know from what has been already said. But how this burnt Soil came to be saltish, we shall shew in our Annotations upon that place of *Deuteronomy*. We may likewise add to what has been mention'd above, against those Gentlemen who maintain, that this Statue of Salt has lasted for so many thousand Years; that altho' it were made of Salt, which equall'd that which is fossil in hardness, yet being expos'd so long to the open Air, cou'd not have lasted so long. The hardest Marble cou'd scarce have suffer'd the force of the Air, of heat, and cold, and rain, and wind, without being considerably injured. They that pretend it was preserv'd by a Miracle, are so accusom'd to defend uncertain Miracles, by more uncertain ones, and are so seldom convinced by the most cogent Reasons in the World, that 'tis not worth the while to confute them.

Therefore since so many monstrous Absurdities stare us in the Face, if with the generality of Mankind, we admit of a *Metamorphosis* here, and *Moses's* words will very well allow of another

ther meaning, 'tis more preferable in my Opinion, to have recourse to that, especially if 'tis more agreeable to Reason. Nay, tho' the Words of the sacred Historian were wrested a little, which we have not done, as is sufficiently evident already, and will be made more plain hereafter. It were better to father a hard Interpretation upon them, than to introduce him speaking Absurdities. 'Tis certainly much more credible, that *Moses* used an improper Phrase, than that he deliver'd plain downright Incongruities, and therefore a forced Interpretation wou'd be infinitely more tolerable, than to feign a prodigious Event, meerly for the sake of expounding two poor doubtful words at best.

IV. But we are opposed, they say, by the Authority of the ancient *Jews* and *Christians*; some Citations out of whom we will produce, besides those we have already brought, least any one should suppose, that we purposely suppress or omitted them. The Author of the Book of *Wisdom*, ch. 10. 7. a perpetual Testimony of Wickedness, a smoking Earth, and Plants bringing forth Fruit at unreasonable times; compare this with the 7th. verse of St. *Jude*, mentioned in the former Dissertation, a Pillar of Salt, standing for a Monument of an unbelieving Mind. *Philo* likewise frequently takes notice of this *Metamorphosis*, as we gather from the two above-cited places out of him, to which we will add this third out of the *Allego-*

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ries of the Law, lib. 2. p. 77. Several Souls, tho' they are willing to repent, yet God does not permit them, but they are carried back as by a strong Tide, like *Lot's Wife*, who for her love of *Sodom* was turned into a Stone. The ancientest Christian who has mentioned this Charge, seems to be *Clemens* in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*; his Wife, says he, went out along with him, but being of a different Opinion, and not persisting in concord, was therefore placed for a Sign, and continues a Statue of Salt to this very day. *Irenæus, l. 4. c. 51.* has the same and something more, as we shall see below: 'Tis to no purpose to alledge the Testimonies of those of a later standing.

Now all that can be gathered from these Testimonies, is only this, that the *Jews* and ancient *Christians* believed this *Metamorphosis* of *Lot's Wife*, which we don't deny; but it does not therefore follow that we are obliged to believe them, because indeed they borrow'd this Opinion from no where else but the words of *Moses* misunderstood, and not from the sight of this Statue, as we shall prove hereafter. Now as they might easily be mistaken in interpreting the Words of *Moses*, as they were in many other things besides, so we are by no means engaged to take their Words in this affair. For all the Authors that 'tis possible to cite upon this occasion, lived in those times, wherein no certain Monuments were extant, from whence they might better discover the truth of this Affair,

fair, than we at this great distance can do, besides the History of *Moses*: Nor were the seventy Interpreters, or those that follow them, so profoundly versed in the *Hebrew* Language, that 'twas not possible for 'em to mistake *Moses's* meaning, as we have shown the contrary in several places of our Commentary: and as for the Moderns, their Authority is of much less weight, since 'tis a plain case, that they were furnished with no better helps to find out the Sense of the Scriptures than we are: And lastly, the numbers of those that are of a contrary Opinion to us, ought not to be brought as an Argument, because after the Septuagint had establish'd this Mistake in their Version, all the rest blindly follow'd them, without even examining the matter. *What one Man has said*, they are the words of a great Man, *All believe and no one questions it*; and therefore if we consider the business aright, only his Authority ought to be weighed in the Ballance who first advanced this Opinion, and if that proves upon Examination to be none of the best, as we hope we have sufficiently evinced, then there is no reason why we should rely upon it.

V. But perhaps some may be of Opinion, that we lose time in seeking to lessen the Authority of the Ancients, since we have not only their great Learning to encounter, but the Testimonies of several Eye-witnesses, as *Josephus* for instance, and some Moderns; by whose Authority rather than the Exposition of *Moses's* words,

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words, this Opinion has found credit enough to last so many Ages. But we are in hopes to solve this Argument with as little Difficulty as we did the former, and if the Reader will be pleas'd carefully to consider what we say, we don't doubt but he will acknowledge as much.

The Testimonies of *Josephus*, and all the rest, may be confuted by one single Argument, which we shall first make use of, tho' we intend to examine the matter more diligently afterwards. All that pretend they have seen the Statue, that we may for once grant that they saw something, might be deceived by the Inhabitants of the place, who perhaps shew'd them a Stone, or something like one, and then very positively affirm'd it was *Lot's Wife*; for how could they know whether they were told the Truth or no? Therefore they had behaved themselves more discreetly in my opinion, if they had written that they saw a Pillar, a Statue, or something like it, which the Inhabitants called a *Statue of Salt*, but that they cou'd not tell whether it was really so or no.

And indeed, such a Caution or Conduct was the more necessary in this Country, because the People of it were more guilty than any other Nations, of imposing old names upon new things, meerly to deceive the lovers of Antiquity. From Reading the Bible, and not from any Tradition of their Ancestors, they were used to guess where every thing of Importance was done, and so shew'd to Strangers who came

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to visit these places, the Footsteps of ancient things, which they themselves had devised. And this is the Reason, that whenever they happen'd to misunderstand the Scripture, they blunder in the situation, and feign things that were never in *rerum natura*, as they do still to this very day. Those that have turn'd over the Writings of St. Jerome, and some Itineraries of the Holy Land, are no doubt on't, sensible how true this Allegation is. But to make the matter plain, beyond any possibility of denying it, we will produce a few Examples out of the vast number that offers itself. St. Jerome in his *Epitavium * Paula*; describing her * A Noble matron of Rome, that went to visit Palestine. Travels through *Judea*, In the *Shore of Sarepta*, says he, *she entered into the little Tower of Elias*.

Now can any Man of tolerable Sense believe, that the Cottage where the poor Widow of *Sarepta* entertained *Elias* formerly, should be standing so many Ages after? nor is there any more reason to believe, that at *Casarea*, The *House of Cornelius the Centurion*, the *little * Cells of Philip*, and the *Bed- * Edicula*. chambers of the four *Virgin Prophetesses*; and at *Emmaus*, the *House of Cloophas*, were still remaining; and yet all these things were shown to *Paula* with a world of Assurance. The same Lady not only saw the Sepulchre of Christ, but likewise *kissed the Stone of the Resurrection*, which the Angel removed from the door of the Monument, and with
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her faithful Mouth licked the place where our Lord's Body lay. Afterwards she was shown a Pillar, supporting the portico of a Church, stained with the Blood of our Saviour, to which he was said to be bound, and whipt; and the place where the Holy Ghost descended upon the Souls of a Hundred and twenty Believers. Then she went forward to Bethlehem, and on the right side of the way, stood near the Sepulchre of Rachel; having entred into Bethlehem, she visited our Saviour's * Cave, and saw the Holy Inn * Specus. of the Virgin. In another part of Judea, she entred into the Cells of Sarah, seeing the place where Isaac was born (who you must know pass'd all their Lives under Tents) with the remainders of Abraham's Oak. Then she went into the Sepulchre of Lazarus, and beheld the Inn where Mary and Martha dwelt. I will instance in no more, since these are sufficient to show what credit is to be given to those People, that show every thing with that wonderful exactness; perhaps some Persons, with whom Credulity and Faith pass for one and the same thing, will maintain, that all these things were truly shown to Paula, but we have all along profess'd, that we don't write to Gentlemen of so voracious a Belief, who will with as much obstinacy combat Truth and Reason, as they swallow foolish Stories with ease.

If we were to gather such sort of Stories out of the Modern Itineraries, it would require no great trouble to collect them, since they frequently

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quently fill both sides of the Page in most of them. Let the Reader only consult *Bellonius* and *Thevenot*, whose Observations we have often made use of, when they describe the Holy Places, and if he is not as heartily weary of them, as ever he was of the most insufferable talkative Coxcomb in the World, I will give him leave to apply my Writings to what use he pleases. I have already declared, that I don't write ἀλόγοις καὶ αἰόλοις, to unthinking Creatures, who will admit and reject whatever they think fit, without any Reason on their side. However, I cannot forbear to Transcribe one exceeding foolish Passage out of *Bellonius*, to show how prettily these Holy Jugglers banter poor credulous Strangers out of the Bible: He tells us, l. 2. c. 8. that among other things that are to be seen without *Jerusalem*, they show in the City Wall, a triangular Stone, which they say is the very same which the Scripture mentions, *Psalm 118. v. 22. viz.* the Builders refused; I humbly suppose there is no occasion to show how monstrously absurd this is.

Now to return to the Statue of Salt, we should not think our selves guilty of ill Manners, should we suspect that *Josephus* did not see so much as the least resemblance of a Statue, altho' we by no means despise that Writer, especially when he comes to the latter part of the *Jewish History*, yet we wou'd never engage in so unsteadfast a Province, as to quit from the Imputation of being sometimes a Fable-monger. In the first

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Book of his Antiquities, *ch.* 2. he tells us, that *Adam* having foretold, that there wou'd be a Destruction of all things, one by Fire, and t'other by Water, the *Antediluvians* built two Pillars, one of Brick, and the other of Stone, and Engraved all their useful Inventions upon each of them, that if the Brick Pillar happen'd to be carried away by the Inundation, the Stone Pillar remaining, might preserve these Monuments for the use of Posterity. He tells us after all, that this Stone Pillar was still extant, *κατὰ τὴν τῆν Συρίας*, in the Land of *Sirias*; where this Land of *Sirias* lies ('tis to be supposed, not far from the Isle of *Pines*) we will not here enquire, but few, I am apt to think, will be able to prevail with themselves to believe that this *Antediluvian* Pillar was standing in *Josephus's* time. But if this does not argue the Fabulousness of a Writer, and his Friends alledge for him, that he was imposed upon by the Relations of other Men, let us hear him describe the *Fluvius Sabbaricus*, or *Sabbath River*, *lib.* 7. *c.* 13. *de Bello Judaico*. He tells us, that *Titus*, as he Travell'd through *Syria*, saw a River worthy ones taking notice of, which runs between *Aræ* and *Raphonæ*, two Cities belonging to the Kingdom of *Agrippa*: When it runs, it has a very plentiful and quick Stream, but for the space of six days, as if the Fountains fail'd it above, 'tis altogether dry; on the seventh day it has a brisk Current again, and this order 'tis observed to keep. If *Josephus* saw the Statue of Salt no better

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better than he did *Tristram's* Sabbath-River, we need not use many words to disprove and invalidate his Testimony: See *Ludolphus* largely discussing this matter, with great variety of Learning, in his Commentary upon the *Æth. Hist.* l. 1. c. 8. Num. 68.

But 'tis pretended, that among the rest that visited these Places, and affirm the Pillar to be still standing, and are cited for that purpose, we find *Benjamin Tudelensis*, and the Lord knows who, one *Bernardus Salignacus*. As for the former, he no where tells us that he beheld this Statue, for these are his words, *From the Sea of Sadom to the Statue of Salt, which was Lot's Wife, 'tis two Leagues. The flocks of Cattle lick of it, but still it grows again as before. 'Twas never my fortune to meet the last, but what follows will sufficiently show that he either told a Story of his own inventing, or was deceiv'd by others. Doubdanus, a Canon of St. Denys, who Printed an Account of the Holy Land at Paris, 1666. informs us, what the honestest Men in those Countries think of the matter, p. 338. Some will pretend, says he, that there is a great Stone of Salt to be seen, which they take for Lot's Wife, &c. but the modern People cannot be persuaded that it cou'd last so long.*

If we will but hear some of them who actually Survey'd these places, and were able to see nothing of the matter, but tell us what Stories they heard from other People, it will soon appear what credit is to be given to these Relations.

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ons. Thus therefore *Brocardus* in his Description of the Holy Land, Part I. *cb.* 7. § 34. *Segar* is situated under the Mountain *Engaddi*, between which and the *Dead Sea*, is the Pillar of Salt, into which *Lot's* Wife was turned. I gave my self the fatigue of a very troublesome Journey to behold this Statue, but was not so happy as to satisfy my Curiosity; for the Inhabitants assur'd me the place was inaccessible, or that it could not be visited without apparent danger of Death, by reason of the prodigious Beasts and Serpents that abounded there, but especially for the *Biduini* that dwell upon the place, a Savage and Inhumane sort of People. We can easily suppose that he endeavoured in vain to see the Statue of Salt, but if there was any such thing *in rerum natura*, it ought to have been looked after on the other side of the *Lacus Asphaltites*, or beyond the Eastern Banks of it, where *Segor* or *Zoar* stood: 'Twill not be amiss to prove the Truth of this Assertion in a few Words. 1. There is no room for us to doubt, but that those Mountains to which *Lot* was commanded to fly, were the Mountains of *Moab*, because he is afterwards said to have erected the Kingdom of the *Moabites* there. Now every body knows, that those Mountains stood Eastwards of the *Dead Sea*, and therefore *Zoar* where *Lot* rested in his way thither, was on the other side of the Lake on the Eastern Bank of it; for 'tis not probable that *Lot*, who was making all the hast he cou'd to the East, took his way

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way through the Country that stands Westwards of the Lake, and pass'd over Jordan. 2. In Deuteronomy 34. 3. where the compass of the Land of Canaan, shewn by God to Moses, is described, after the Northern, Western, and Southern Tracts are mentioned, it follows, the Plain of Jericho to Zoar, from whence we gather, that this City stood to the Eastwards, over against Jericho. 3. And therefore in after Ages it belonged to the Moabites, as appears from Isaiah 15. 5. Jeremy the 48. 34. 4. For the same reason, Josephus de Bell. Jud. l. 4. c. 27. places this City in Arabia, where he says that the Lacus Asphaltites reaches μέγα Zoάγων τῆς Αραβίας, as far as Zoar, a City of Arabia. St. Jerome likewise in Loc. Hebr. places it beyond the Dead Sea over against Jericho, The Salt Sea which is called the Dead, or the Sea of Asphaltus, i. e. Bitumen lies between Jericho and Zoar.

Therefore Anselm the Minorite, whose words are cited by Quaresmius, in his Elucidatio Terre Sanctæ, Tom. 2. l. 6. c. 14. was in the right when he said as follows; Segor is situated in the Eastern Shore of this Sea, in part of Arabia where this Statue of Salt is, into which Lot's Wife was turned; 'tis very dangerous to go to see it, by reason of the Madianites dwelling thereabouts, who spare no body. But what follows is extremely absurd, This Sea, as 'tis commonly reported, sometimes swells to such a vast Degree, that the whole Statue is covered with it, and is not to be seen; sometimes it decreases so much, that

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the Breast and Knees of it may be seen. It stands in a pleasant place between *Segor* and the *Dead Sea*: How in the name of wonder, can this be a pleasant place, which is not only situate upon the Banks of the *Lacus Asphaltites*, but sometimes buried under the Waters of it?

Let us now hear *Quaresmius* himself, who was Præfident and Apostolical Commissary of the Holy Land, and Printed his *Elucidation* at *Antwerp*, *Whether*, says he, *this Statue is still extant I cannot determine, for I saw it not*. But some venerable old Men that came from those Parts assured me they had seen it, by the same Token, that a piece of it being taken from it one day, they found it restored the next, which *Tertullian* likewise observed, and so still continued. The *Biduini*, who carry Salt to *Jerusalem* from the *Mare Mortuum*, do likewise affirm that there is a small *Chappel* there. These courteous good old Gentlemen pretended they had seen what they had only read or heard of, for it was a venerable Report many Ages old, that this Statue was not diminished, and the reason of such a Report was this, that they might have something to stop the mouths of those incredulous People, who wou'd be saying, they cou'd not imagine how it should last for so many Ages. And least any one should object, that it might be a heap of Salt in that saltish Soil, such as are to be seen in other places, they pretended there were infallible Indications to prove it a Female Statue, supporting one Lie with another,

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ther, for fear the Story should catch cold. The Author of the Poem concerning Sodom, which is added to Tertullian's Works,

*In fragilem mutata salem, stetit ipsa sepulchrum
Ipsaq; imago sibi, formam sine corpore servans
Durat ad huc etenim nudâ statione sub æthram,
Nec pluvius dilapsa situ, nec diruta ventis.
Quin etiam si quis mutilaverit advena formam
Protinus ex sese suggestu vulnera complet
Dicitur & vivens alio sub corpore sexus
Munificos solito dispungere sanguine Menses.*

Neither was Tertullian the Inventor of this silly Fiction, for St. Irenæus had it before him, as appears by the following words, lib. 4. l. 51. *The Wife* remain'd in Sodom, not now a corruptible Flesh, but an everlasting Statue of Salt, and through her Privities, showing her *Menses* after the manner of Women; because the Church, which is the Salt of the Earth, is left in the Confinés of the Earth, suffering those things that are Human, and tho' whole Members are often taken from it, yet it perseveres a Statue of Salt, which is the Foundation of Faith, strengthening and sending the Sons to their Father. *This excellent Man* was impos'd upon by some monstrous Story-teller, and perhaps too greedily swallowed what he heard, without thoroughly examining his witness's Reputation. It has been long ago observed by some Judicious Persons, that Orators are allow'd to take some liberty in

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History, that they may be able to say something fine and *Elegant*. Now this manner of Death for *Lot's* Wife, was capable of all the Beauties of Rhetorick and Strains of Tragedy ; but the common Death as we have said is described by *Moses*, afforded little or no matter for Pomp and Ornament.

This seems to be the reason, why some of our Modern Writers of Travels have given an Account of what they never saw, not to take notice, that perhaps they were ashamed to say, they had not seen that, which others who had been in those Parts pretended to have seen, lest the World should take them not to have made a true use of their Travels. *Christopher Fureur*, a Noble-man of *Germany*, whose Travels of *Palestine* and the neighbouring Countries, were Printed at *Nurimberg*, in the Year 1621. affirms, that he washed his Hands in the *Lacus Asphaltites*, and found that the taste of it was very nasty, and more saltish then ever he found ; but he makes not the least mention of the Statue of Salt. *Bellonius* was in the Province of *Jericho* about *Jordan*, and describes all the Nations about it, l. 2. c. 86. but is silent as to this wonderful Statue ; whether he had heard nothing concerning it, or was of opinion that the common Reports were false. You'll find *Thevenot* does the same, if you read ch. 41. l. 2. Part I. of his Travels into the East. Nay, *Nicholas Christopher Radziwil*, a Polish Prince, who Survey'd these Places with all the exactness imaginable, I inquired,

says

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says he, very carefully of our *Arabian*, and those that are well skill'd in our Country, who all of them affirm'd, that nothing like it was there to be found.

To return now to the more ancient Times, we might to these Witnesses add *St. Jerome*, who lived so many Years in *Palestine*, and took no little care to divulge things of this Nature, and yet he never makes the least mention of this Statue of Salt, altho' he takes notice of the Subversion of *Sodom*, of *Lot*, nay even of his Wife too. Those that are acquainted with his Character, and know what Pains he takes to show his own wit even upon the names of Places, and other Witticisms, tho' never so far fetched, are no doubt on't sensible, that he wou'd never have lost so Glorious an opportunity as this everlasting Statue afforded him to exercise his Talent upon; if any one had presumed to affirm, that so remarkable a Monument was extant in his Time. In his Epitaph of *Paula*, where he hunts after Mysteries from every place which she saw, or even beheld at a distance, he lost the best opportunity of showing his Wit, that he could have desired, if at that time this Famous Statue was to be seen. *As soon as the Sun was up*, says he, she stood upon the Brow of *Capbar Baracha*, that is the Town of Benediction, to which place *Abraham* followed the Lord; from whence she beheld a vast Solitude, and the Ground where formerly *Sodom*, and *Gomorrab*, *Adma* and *Zeboim* stood. She view'd the Vine-

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yards of Balsam in *Engaddi* and *Soger*, *vitulam conterwantem*, which was formerly called *Bale*, and was in the *Syrian* Dialect Translated into *Zoar*, that is, a little one. She remembered the Cave of *Lot* (and why not the Statue of Salt, if it was still remaining) and shedding Tears, admonished her Virgin Companions to abstain from Wine, the unlucky Parent of Luxury. If the Statue of *Lot's* Wife had been then believed to be on the other side of the *Lacus Asphaltites*, how opportunely might he have introduced *Paula*, admonishing her Companions to eschew Earthly things, and not to look back. In his Epistle to *Rusticus*, tho' he makes mention of *Lot's* Wife, yet he says no more of her than that disordered by Despair, and looking behind her, she was condemn'd to wear an everlasting Mark of her Infidelity. In his Commentary upon *Amos*, c. 4. 11. *Lot*, says he, was saved, tho' *Sodom* was destroyed, losing the part and substance of his Body, by which we understand *his* Wife; and yet this perpetual affecter of Allegories, says no more of her. All which Circumstances clearly shew, that in *St. Jerome's* time no body believed that this Statue of Salt was then Extant.

VI. And indeed we have no Arguments to prove she was turn'd into a Statue; 'tis far more probable, that the Woman either grew benum'd by fear, or else was suffocated by some Bituminous or Sulphureous Vapour. When she saw her native Country destroy'd by Fire from Hea-

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ven and Earth, with a dreadful Noise, the Ground trembling under her Feet, and she recollected in her mind the sad Destiny that beset all her Friends and Relations, except her Husband and two Daughters; What wonder is it if Grief and Fear so possess her Spirits, that she immediately expired, or at least fainted away, and no one being by to assist her in that *deliquium*, died upon the spot. *Plutarch in Sympos, L. 4. Qu. 2.* affirms, that several Persons have been killed meerly with the fright of Thunderbolts: *Add to this*, says he, the Consternation and Fear, by which abundance of Men that suffered not the least Injury have been carried off, only by their being too apprehensive of Death. Great numbers have been kill'd by Thunder, who have not any Footsteps of being struck or burnt, because their Soul with meer fear has flown out of their Body like a Bird. Many, as *Euripides* says, have been destroyed by the very breath of Thunder, for at other times also the Hearing is easiest affected of any of the Senses, those Disturbances and Apprehensions that proceed from Noise, giving always the most terrible Alarms to the *Soul*. Besides it has been observ'd, that several have been stupified to that degree by an Earthquake, that they have run up and down like Persons distracted and out of their wits; which sad Accident, if it surprized this poor Woman, as her Husband was making the best of his way to escape, 'tis no Mystery that she was not able to save herself. *Seneca* tells us,

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that this frequently happen'd when *Campania* was shaken by an Earthquake, *Sen. Quæst. Nat. l. 6. c. 1.* and in the 38th. Chapter of the same Book he assigns the following Reasons for it, for if Fear, even when it is moderate and not so general, makes Men reel up and down as if they were actually mad; what wonder is it, that when the Terror is publick, when Cities fall, when the Earth trembles, when whole Multitudes are Buried in the Ruins, that our Minds, what between Fear and Grief should forsake us.

'Tis a hard matter not to be concern'd, when we see Thousands before us are so, and therefore the most resolute Dispositions were so disorder'd by Fear, that they knew not what they did; Nay Men of the best Courage are not exempted from Fear, and the wise Stoick was never yet to be found, who (as the same Philosopher expresses himself) cou'd without any manner of concern behold the dreadful and angry Face of Heaven when it Thunders, tho' the Firmament were dissolved, and darted its Fires to the Destruction of every thing, but especially itself. There is not, and never was such a Man in the World, that cou'd behold the Ground breaking under him, and be at the same time fearless and unconcern'd. And can any one therefore think it strange if we say, that *Lot's Wife*, overcome by so Tragical a Spectacle, was benumbed or fainted away, and consequently cou'd not save herself by flight?

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If any one shall Reply, that this manner of Death does not seem probable to them, perhaps 'tis no absurd Conjecture, that this Woman not only cast back her Eyes towards her native Country, but went back thither as soon as the Angels were gone, to behold the Burning of it nearer, and so was suffocated by some poisonous Vapour; as *Pliny* the Elder was, whom his Curiosity led too near the Mountain *Vesuvius*. And this seems to be implied in our Blessed Saviour's Words, *Luke 17. 32.* Where after he had said *Let no Man return back*, i. e. to *Jerusalem*, after he was once gone out of it, the Siege of it now drawing near, he immediately adds, *Remember Lot's Wife*, who returned back perhaps to see whether she cou'd save any of her Household Stuff. Nor do the Angels seem to have forbidden *Lot's Wife* to look back, as if God Almighty would punish her with Death, only for casting her Eyes back, but that she might not loyter and tarry as those Persons are used to do, who often look behind them out of Love to the place which they leave, or are minded when a Town is destroying, to behold at a nearer Distance what becomes of it. And the following Words, *and stay not in all the Plain*, seem to have been added to oblige them to make the greater speed; the Angels therefore advis'd them to hasten, because as the Destruction encreased on all sides, they might be consumed with the rest, tho' they only tarried to look on, which frequently happens in such Earthquakes and Fire,

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as are fed and nourished by the Nature of the Soil. *Cornelius Severus*, in his Poem of *Ætna* says,

*Ardebant arvis segetes, & millia culta
Fugera cum dominis, sylva, collesq; virentes, &c.
Cunctantes vorat ignis, & undiq; terret avaros.*

Namely, such as tarried behind to carry off their Wealth, which perhaps *Lot's Wife* endeavour'd to do, and because she was not removed from the place where she fell, therefore she is said to be like a Statue of Salt in that salt Country. Nor is there any reason to urge the Emphasis, since we find the same Expression used about Matters of less Importance. In the first of *Samuel*, c. 25. v. 37. the Sacred Historian speaks thus concerning *Nabal*, *And his heart was dead within him, and he was changed into a Stone*, that is, after his Wife *Abigale* had recounted to him the Danger he had escaped, by her making some Presents to *David*, this foolish old Hunk, either out of Fear or Covetousness, was so stupified, that he seem'd to be a Stone, and died within ten Days. But altho' *Nabal* is here said to be made a Stone, yet no one will conclude from thence, that he was actually *Metamorphos'd* into a Stone: So in like manner we must not suppose *Lot's Wife* was a Statue of Salt, for all she is said to become a Statue of Salt, or in Salt. The Latin Poets have used the like Expressions to signifie a mighty Amazement: Thus *Ovid*
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introduces *Ariadne*, who had been abandon'd by *Theseus*, and left all alone in a solitary Island, expressing her Grief and Wonder,

*Aut mare prospiciens in saxo frigida sedi,
Quamq; lapis sedes, tam LAPIS ipsa fui.*

Metam, l. 5.

Mater ad auditos stupuit, ceu saxea, voces.

And l. 13. speaking of *Hecuba*, after she had seen *Polydorus's* dead Body,

———Duroq; simillima saxo
Torpet———

VII. In the most ancient Histories of the *Greeks*, which are called *Μύθοι*, we find innumerable Stories or Fables, not corrupted so much for the sake of Lying, but because the Narrations of the ancient Inhabitants were not understood well enough, and because their Metaphorical Expressions were erroneously interpreted in the proper or literal Sense. We will here set down some few Examples of it, which we hope will not be unpleasant or disagreeable to the Reader.

They that first related the History of *Niobe*, who was destroy'd by Grief, *dirigiusq; males*; i. e. was rendred stupid, or senseless, by her Misfortunes, perhaps expressed it after such a manner

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ner as we find the Sacred Historian did in the Story of *Nabal*; which after Ages, not regarding the Meaning, so understood, as if *Niobe* had been really changed into a Statue of Stone. But Men of more acute Understandings were aware that something else was formerly meant by it. *Niobe*, says *Tully*, in his *Tusc.* 3. was for a reason supposed to be turned into a Stone; because, as I imagine, she was everlastingly silent in her Grief. *Palæphatus de incred. Hist.* c. 9. who ever believes a Man was made of a Stone, or a Stone made of a Man, is a Fool. But the Reality of the Truth is this: *Niobe*, after the Death of her Children, caused her own Statue to be made, and placed it upon their Sepulchre. We might here observe by the bye, that *Niobe's* Misfortune is said to have happened in *Phrygia*; which Country, as we have remark'd in the former Dissertation, has a great Affinity with the Valley of *Sodom*, since both of them are καυμένη, i. e. burnt. We might add too, that *Niobe's* Children are reported to be buried by the Gods; which *Izetzes* thus interprets, *Chil.* 4. *Carm.* 141.

*These Gods are Elements, which thus interr'd
Her wretched Children, Earthquakes, Thunder,
Floods,
Perswaded cruel Men to give them burial.*

His Conjecture had been far better supported, if he had told us that they were swallowed up by
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an Earthquake; at that time when *Sipylus*, where they lived, was overwhelmed in ruins, as we observed before, and that People in following times said they were buried by the Gods, because they were cover'd with Earth, without any humane Labour or Assistance. We might likewise take notice, that this Earthquake occasion'd some Lakes near *Sipylus* to make this Misfortune of *Niobe* more like the Death of *Lot's* Wife; but here we only regard those figurative Expressions, from whence these Fables arose. We will only add, that both of 'em are joined together by *Clemens Alexandrinus* for the likenels of their Destruction, in *Admonit. ad Gentes*; p. 65. For have not all of you been chang'd into Men without Sense, like some *Niobe*; or to speak more mystically, like the Wife of that Hebrew, whom the Ancients called *Lot*?

The Story of *Medusa*, one of the Gorgons, seems to proceed from the same Original. The *Græcians* had been informed by the *Phœnicians*, that in the *Atlantic* Ocean, beyond a Mountain which is called *θεῶν ὄχημα*; i. e. the Vehicle of the Gods, an Island was discover'd, the Inhabitants of which were cover'd all over with Hair like Beasts, and appear'd in so terrible a shape at first to those that beheld them, that with Fear and Surprise, they were as it were changed into Stones; which in the *Phœnician* Language, wou'd be thus express'd, *Et viderunt, Et facti sunt in lapides*; and they saw, and were made

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made into stones. The *Greeks* so understood it, as if Men by only looking upon them were actually turned into real stones. Which is full as absurd as if the words of *Job*, c. 41. 19. where he describes the mighty strength of a *Crocodile*, and says, that *the stones* of a Sling are by him turned into Stubble, should be so wretchedly misinterpreted, as if the sacred Writer affirm'd, there was a certain Beast in the World indu'd with that wonderful Vertue, that it cou'd turn the stones that were thrown at him into stubble. The *Phœnicians* had added, that there were several Women in that Island, which they call'd *Fogides*, because perhaps they call'd the Island *Gorgab* in their own Language; which word, by an *Arabism*, signifies a *stony Ground*, as that Island was, whence the word *Gorgith*, i.e. a Woman of the Island *Gorgab*. The word *Garagon* likewise is used by the *Arabians*, when *Gorgon* is formed. The *Phœnicians* had affirm'd it in their Relations, that none of these Men cou'd be taken because they fled towards the Mountains, and defended themselves with stones; but that they had taken three Women, who, because they assaulted their Leaders with tooth and nail, were kill'd by them, and their Skins carried to *Carthage*; from which place these Daughters of *Phorcy's* were taken by the *Grecians*; one of whom having her Head, which was cover'd with Snakes, cut off by *Perseus*, it was said to have turn'd Men into stones with only looking upon it. That most Learned Man *Isaac Vossius*, discover'd

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discover'd part of this a pretty while ago, and show'd that something of truth lurked under this Fable out of *Hanno* the General of the *Carthaginians*; who, as he tells us himself in his *Periplus*, had been as far as these places, and from thence brought the *Gorgon's Skin* home to his own Country. We have more particularly explain'd it than he has done; however, 'tis a most certain Observation he made, that these Fables don't merely arise from nothing, as elsewhere it happens, but have truth for their foundation, as we find it verified in this instance.

Samuel Bochart has illustrated this Observation with an infinite number of Examples in his *Geographia sacra*, which every one almost is acquainted with, and therefore I will not give myself the trouble to transcribe them here. I will only give one of my own to make it more plainly appear, that the Stile of the Oriental Writers, who always affected bold and pompous Metaphors, is not to be expounded by our modern way of speaking, which is one of the greatest Faults the Interpreters of them have committed. When they wou'd find out the Meaning of any Word or Expression, they rather consider how they wou'd be understood if they spoke so now, than how those People who differ no less from us in Opinion and Fancy, than they are distant from us in relation to time or place, wou'd understand them.

The Fable of the *Harpyes* is well enough known, and we need not otherwise expound it
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than by comparing it with the truth. *First*, To begin with the name, 'Αετὺς is the very same with the Hebrew word *Arbeh*, which signifies a Locust. *Secondly*, One of them is call'd *Celæno*. Now in Syriac, *Solbams* is a kind of a Locust, and the Letters *M* and *N* are frequently changed, as appears by the words *Moph* and *Noph*, the name of the City *Memphis*, and several other Examples. Another of them, as we are inform'd by *Hyginus*, *Fab.* 14. was called *Achelœe*, which is certainly derived from *achal*, to eat or to devour, as *Salbam* in *Chaldee*, from whence the name of the former is derived. Another's name was *Aello*, which word comes from the Phœnician *babol*, which signifies a Storm, (for which see *S. Bochart's Canaan*, l. 1. c. 33.) because the Winds commonly bring the Locusts. *Thirdly*, This is a reason why they are said to be the Daughters of a Tempestuous Wind. *Valerius Flaccus*, l. 4. speaking of *Celæno*, says;

Implorat clamore patrem Typhona nefando.

The Wind brought the Locusts into *Ægypt*, as we find in *Moses*, *Exod.* 10. 13. *Fourthly*, They were carried away by a contrary Wind, as appears by the 19th Verse of the same Chapter. So in the Poets *Zethes* and *Calais*, the winged Sons of *Boreas* drive them away from *Phineus*, that is, the Northern Winds. *Fifthly*, The *Harpies* created a Famine in the Country of *Phineus* King of *Bithynia*. If

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If they leave any thing untouch'd behind them, as one complains in *Apollonius*, l. 2. The Locusts as they greedily devour every green thing, occasion a Famine or Dearth where ever they come. *Bochartus* has abundance of things upon this occasion, *Hieroz. part 2. l. 4.* in the six first Chapters. *Sixthly*, The *Harpyes* are reported to have left a most nasty Smell behind them, as *Phineus* tells us in *Apollonius*, in the following Verses; viz. v. 229.

'Tis the most noisom Smell,
 No Mortal can endure it,
 Even tho' his Heart was fenc'd with Iron a-
 round it.

How patly this agrees with the Locusts, will sufficiently be demonstrated by these words of *St. Jerome* in his Commentary upon *Joel*, ch. 2. We have beheld in our times vast Armies of Locusts cover the Land of *Judæa*; which afterwards, through the Mercy of the Lord, were by a strong Gale of Wind carried into the Sea: — And when the Sea Shores were fill'd with prodigious heaps of these Locusts that were drowned in the water, the noisome *Putrefaction* and *Smell* of them was so hurtful, that it infected the very Air, and caused a Pestilence as well of Beasts, as Men. 'Tis said, the *Cossacks* sometimes have vast numbers of them, which after they are dead leave an abominable Stink
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behind them. *Seventhly*, The *Harpyes* destroy'd whatever they touched, as *Plineas* complains in the above-mentioned Verses, and so do the Locusts, as *S. Bochart* acquaints in his *Hieroz*, p. 2. l. 4. c. 3. *Eighthly*, The *Harpyes* when they came to devour *Phineas's* Meat, came with a mighty Swiftnes and Noise, which *Apollonius* thus describes, v. 267.

*But they like some strange sudden Tempest rises,
Or like the Lightning, darting thro' the Skies,
Broke from the Clouds with sad affrighting Cries.*

Bochartus, in the fifth Chapter of the above-mentioned Book, will sufficiently inform us, what a horrid noise the Locusts make with their Teeth, and with their Flying. *Ninthly*, *Phineus* could not drive away the *Harpyes*.

*These cursed Harpyes still my Tables haunt,
No way to stop their coming, or deceive them.
All rush together ———*

Nor can the Violence of the Locusts be avoided, as we find in *Joel*, ch. 2. and the incomparable *Bochart* in his fourth Chapter, where he interprets the words of *Joel*. *Tenthly*, The *Harpyes* ravaged *Phineus's* House against his Will. They march through the City, says *Joel*, ch. 2. 9. they climb the Houses, they creep in at the very Windows like a Thief. In that part of *Scythia*

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thia which the *Cossacks* now inhabit, there are such vast numbers of Locusts, that they get into their Houses and Beds, and leap upon their Tables and Meat, that the People can scarce sit down to Dinner without these troublesome Guests, as those that have travell'd through those Countries have testified in writing. See Monsieur *Thevenot's* Collection of Travels, Part I. in his Description of the *Cossacks*. Eleventhly, The *Harpyes* could not be wounded, as *Virgil* tells us.

*Invadunt socii & nova praelia tentant,
Obscenas pelagi ferro sedare volucres
Sed neq; vim plumis ullam, nec vulnera tergo,
Accipiunt ———*

Joel says the same of the Locusts, *ch. 2. 4.* They rush through Darts, and are not wounded, and indeed this swift and sudden Plague cannot be beaten away by Arms. Twelfthly, *Appollonus* and *Valerius Flaccus* tells us, that by an unusual Anger of the Gods they were sent to *Pbineus*; and that is the reason why the former calls them *μεγαλοιο Διὸς Κύνες*, the Dogs of great *Jupiter*; and by the latter they are stiled *deæ*, i. e. Goddesses.

*Jam satis hac pepulisse Deas, cur tendetis ultra,
In famulas sævire Jovis, fulmina quanquam,
Ægidâq; ille gerat, magnas sibi legit in iras.*

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And

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And so in *Joel, ch. 2. 11.* the Locusts are called the Army of the Lord.

This, as I imagine, sufficiently shows, that the figurative Expressions of the *Eastern* People, unless they are rightly understood, may occasion great Mistakes ; and now, no one will admire that we have given another Interpretation of the *Statue of Salt*, than is commonly done, and which the words at the first sight seem to intimate.

VIII. From hence we may gather how little Foundation there is in this Expression, *and she was a Statue of Salt* ; as likewise in the words of our Saviour, *This is my Body* ; to infer a real Conversion of the Bread into the Body of Christ ; which Passage some Learned Men in *France* have lately too greedily laid hold of to defend their monstrous Opinion. We shall not here prosecute the other Differences between this Expression and the Words of Christ, even though we acknowledged there was a real *Metamorphosis* of *Lot's Wife* ; for we resolved to meddle with no Controversies here, but thought fit to expose the Weakness of this Argument, being thereunto led by this History.

Seeing therefore that matters are so as we have represented them, we think we may make bold to affirm, that the common Belief of the Pillar of Salt, wholly proceeded from misunderstanding the words of *Moses*, and has been obstinately maintain'd by the Vanity of some,
and

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and the Credulity of others. Nor is there any reason, as we hope we have fully demonstrated, to oppose the Consent and Authority of the Ancients to our Opinion, which the most bigotted Patron of them will never pretend that they are to be received blindly, and without examination; or when they are proved upon a due search to be ill-grounded, and contradictory to Reason, that they are to be preferr'd before a better. What then? Shall I follow the footsteps of the Ancients? I will indeed follow the beaten road, but if I can find out a nearer and plainer way; I will keep to that. They that writ before us, are our Guides, but not our Masters. The truth lies open for all; it is not wholly possess'd as yet, but much of it is still left for the Discovery of those that come behind us. *Sen. Epist.* 33.

Dissertation XI.

Concerning the Coming of Shiloh.

- I. *The great Difficulty of this Place.* II. *That David is not meant by it.* III. *Both Jewish and Christian Interpreters are of Opinion, that something is here Promised, which is to cease at the coming of the Messias.* IV. *The Interpretation of some Jews Refuted.* V. *Some maintain, that nothing but the Dissolution of the Jewish Monarchy is meant in this Prediction.* *Reflections upon the Whole.*

I. **T**Here is scarce any Place in the whole Bible, which has more employ'd the Jewish and Christian Interpreters, than this Passage in *Genesis*. I. The three *Chaldee* Paraphrasts, *Onkelos*, *Jonathan*, and that of *Jerusalem*, with severall Rabbines of the same Opinion, whose Testimonies have been Collect'd by Learned Men, affirm, that the Remarkable Deliverer, whom by way of Excellence they call'd the *Messias*, was signified by the word *Shilo*. But a very celebrated Rabbine, *Aben Ezra* by name, opposes his Country-men, and maintains, that *David* of the Tribe of *Judab*, and afterwards King, was here meant. But altho' we own that
the

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the Tribe of *Judab*, ever since *Jacob's* time, enjoyed some Prerogative of honour above the rest ; yet in the first place, neither *Scepter*, nor *Lawgiver*, belonged more to that, than any of the other Tribes, till *David* was advanced to the Throne : In the common Administration of Affairs, the other Tribes were never concluded by their Votes, nor had they any manner of dependence upon them, nay the Tribe of *Benjamin* had a King chosen out of their body before that of *Judab*. And therefore it cou'd never be said that *Judab* should have a Scepter and Lawgiver, till *David's* Elevation to the Regal Dignity ; for although it should be allow'd, yet in what sense cou'd it be said, that the Kingdom should remain with *Judab*, till the coming of him who fixt the Crown in that Tribe.

II. Some Jewish and Christian Interpreters are fully agreed, that something is here promised to the Tribe of *Judab*, or to the whole body of *Israel*, which was to cease at the coming of the *Messias*, or a short time after. Those that maintain the whole Republick of the *Hebrews* descended from *Jacob* to be meant here, don't consider that *Jacob* foretells their Destiny in this place, to each Tribe one after another ; nor can they produce one single instance out of the Scriptures, where the whole People of *Israel* are call'd *Judab*, before the *Babylonian* Captivity. Neither can it be replied, that *Jacob* might very well give his Posterity this name,

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because

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because the Holy Ghost, who spoke out of his Mouth, knew that at the time when this Prophecy was to be fulfilled, the common name of all the Tribes should be that of the * *Jews*; because, as we observ'd just before, *Jacob* only says such things as belonged to every Tribe in particular, and does not mingle their common lot together; and besides, if the last words of this Prophecy are to be understood of the People of *Israel* in general, why should not the former be so too? and that being once granted, how cou'd the Interpreters say that *Shilo* ought to be descended from *Judab*?

Therefore it necessarily follows, that something peculiar is foretold to the Tribe of *Judab* in this place. The Ancients were of opinion, that the Administration of all Affairs in the *Jewish* Republick was in the Tribe of *Judab*, ever since the time when *Jacob* pronounced these words, to the coming of our Saviour. Now, 'tis certain, that neither before King *David*, nor after *Zedekiah*, any one of the Tribe of *Judab* had the Regal Authority, as all that are never so little conversant with sacred History will own. Therefore others acknowledge, that there was indeed no King of the Tribe of *Judab* before *David*, and after *Zedekiah*; but for all that

* After the *Babylonian* Captivity, the whole body of *Israelites* that were in *Palestine*, were called *judim* or *Jews*, because the first that returned home were chiefly of the Tribe of *Israelites*. Afterwards this name was given to all the rest, in whatsoever part of the World they resided.

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maintain, it may truly be said that the *Jewish* Republick should not be utterly dissolved before the coming of the *Messias*, because out of that Tribe the Common-wealth recovered their strength by degrees, and preserv'd some sort of Government in their hands, even till the days of Christ. But *Jacob* does not promise, that the Scepter should continue with *Judah*, and not be wholly taken from him, till the *Messias* should come, but that *it should not depart from him*; which Expression plainly denotes; the perpetual Continuation of a Kingdom, interrupted by no Calamities.

III. Some *Jews* are of opinion, that 'tis here prophecy'd of *Judah*, that the *Rod* wherewith he is to be beaten, shall not depart from him; but that still one or other shall command, and impose Laws upon him, till the coming of the *Messias*. But besides, that the particular words, which compose this Prediction, will by no means admit of this Interpretation, it is apparently false, whither we understand the Tribe of *Judah*, or the whole People of *Israel*, as it may easily be proved by the History of the Old Testament, and particularly the Reigns of *David* and *Solomon*.

We will not pursue this Argument any farther, which wou'd furnish matter enough for a large Volume, if it were to be examined with all that Nicety it deserves. But the Reader may consult for his farther Satisfaction *Huetius's Demonstratio Evangelica, Prop. 9. Cap. 4.*
where

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where he has set down all the different Opinions with incredible Pains and Accuracy. To him may be added the *Pugio Fidei*, p. 2. cap. 4. with the Learned Observations of *Jos. de Voisin*, where the several Testimonies of the Rabbines chiefly are collected. We shall only subjoin another Interpretation of this Prophecy, which they have not taken notice of; and some People perhaps upon a due examination will find it to be more agreeable not only to the Grammatical Sense of the words, but also to the Events here predicted.

IV. Some Persons therefore believe, that *Jacob* promised nothing more to *Judah* in this place, but that when the Regal Dignity had once honour'd his Tribe, it should be translated to no other, but continue there till it was wholly extinguished. The Maintainers of this Opinion interpret *Shiloh* to be the *End* or Cessation of it, to wit, of the Scepter and Royal Power. Now if this were the true Interpretation of the word, there is nothing in *Jacob's* Prediction which wou'd occasion the least difficulty: for it appears by the sacred History, that from the time that *David* sat upon the Throne of *Israel*, the Kings descended from him govern'd the Tribe of *Judah* without the Intervention of any other Family, till the Kingdom of *Judah* was wholly dissolv'd. Whereas in the Kingdom of the ten Tribes, even before it was utterly destroy'd by *Salmanassar*, the Regal Dignity did not stand in one, but several Tribes,

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Tribes, according to the different Descent of their Kings. The chief Objection that can be rais'd against this Interpretation will be, that it disarms the Christians of an Oracle, own'd by the *Jews* themselves, whereby they have successfully prov'd against the latter, that the *Messias* was already come. But an Interpreter must not always consider what the *Jews* will give him leave to say, or what wou'd be serviceable to his Cause, if it were true, but what is really consonant to the Truth it self, no less than if there were no such People as the *Jews* now in the World, or if we had never had the least Dispute with them about the coming of the *Messias*. Though the *Jews* were not mistaken in their Expectation of the *Messias*, yet all those places in the Old Testament, which out of their former immoderate, and now their preposterous Desire of his coming, they have expounded concerning him, must not therefore be affirmed to relate to him, merely because the *Jews* think so. That the Rabbins have forced several Passages in the Bible to favour the *Messias*, without any reason on their side, is sufficiently known to those that have either read them, or what the Christians have collected out of their Writings. Therefore as it was a true Tradition of the ancient *Jews*, that there should come at last a Deliverer to *Israel*, so any unprejudiced Person will own that they might sometimes commit Mistakes in expounding some Text of the O. Testament, which they supposed to relate to him.

V. This

V. This we don't say with that prospect, as if we had the Vanity to imagine that this last Interpretation of *Jacob's* Prophecy ought to take place of all other, whether already found out, or hereafter to be discover'd, as being the unquestionable meaning of this Passage: but that after the Merits of all the other Opinions have been impartially considered, it will more plainly appear either on which side the Truth stands, or where and by what Methods it is to be acquir'd, or lastly why it cannot be found out?

Dissertation XII.

In which several Obscure Texts in Genesis are explained and illustrated.

AND God said let there, ch. i. 3.] The Hebrews commonly describe God working all things by his Word, to denote his transcendent Power over the whole Creation, and with what ease he does whatever he pleases. Thus the Psalmist, *Psalms 33. 6. By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth: Psalm 148. 5. He commanded, and they were created.* And as he creates by his Commands, so he destroys after the same manner. *He shall smite the Earth,* says *Isaiah, c. 11. 4. with the Rod of his Mouth,*

Mouth, and with the Breath of his Lips he shall slay the Wicked. If there is any Sublimity in these Expressions, as we own there is, it is to be ascribed to the Genius of the Hebrew Language, and not to the Eloquence of *Moses*, as *Longinus*, περί Ίψης imagined: for otherwise *Moses* rather uses an humble stile in his Historical Narrations, as *Huetius* has observed, *Prop. 4. c. 2. Dem. Evang.*

And the Earth brought forth Grass, ch. 1. 12.]

This Verse is a meer Repetition of the former, which after *Moses* had said *and it was so*, was altogether unnecessary. But the Hebrew Writers are far from that Severity of the Atticks, who could not endure any Superfluities. Several things are redundant in the sacred Volumes, and others defective, which wou'd not a little contribute to the Perspicuity of the Sentence. However, this is not so much to be attributed to their Writers, as to the Condition of their Language, which the most partial Patron of it must acknowledge to be unpolished and uncultivated, though it sometimes affects, as has been observed in the preceding Praragraph, according to the Genius of the other Oriental Languages, a pompous and magnificent way of Expression.

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, ch. 2. 3.] As one contrary is best illustrated by another, it will not be *mal à propos* to enquire what is the meaning of *Maledicere diis*, i. e. to curse a day; that so we may under-

understand what it is, *benedicere dici*, or to bless a day. Among the Hebrews that was said to be a *maledictus dies*, or a cursed day, which the Greeks called *ἀνορεγς*, and the Romans *exsecrables*, or unauspicious, by reason of some remarkable Destruction or Calamity which had happen'd on that day. Thus, *Jeremiah* 20. 14. the Prophet to denote how wretched a Life he lived, *Cursed be the day*, says he, *wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my Mother bore me be blessed*: That is, let that day be reckoned ominous in all future Ages, for the Birth of an unfortunate Child. The Roman Senate out of a servile Compliment to *Nero*, decreed that *Agrippina's* Birth-day should be reckon'd among the *dies nefasti*, as we find in *Tacitus, Ann.* 14. 12. Which Custom the Romans borrowed from the Græcians, and they from the Oriental People. Now on such a day they were forbidden to show any publick mirth, or rejoycing in memory of the unlucky Accident whatever it was, that happen'd on it. Hence *Job* cursing the day of his Nativity, wishes, *ch.* 3. 7. *that no joy be in it*. And therefore to *curse a day*, is all one as to pray that it may become execrable and ominous, and that all Demonstrations of Gladness may be intermitted upon it; to *bless a day* is to wish that it may be esteemed fortunate, and celebrated with publick Rejoycings, and a *blessed day* is the same with a happy, or a festival day. From these Premises it follows, that when God is said to have blessed the seventh day,

day, we are to understand by that passage, *Deum voluisse eum diem festum haberi, & hilariter transigi*. However, we are not to infer from this place, that Mankind ever since the Creation of *Adam*, observ'd this day as a Festival, because *Moses* when he relates the History of the earliest times, frequently takes occasion to remind the Israelites of the Original of some Rites which he instituted; and does not speak as *Adam*, or those that were before him would have done if they had transmitted their own Actions in writing, but suits himself to the Language and Genius of his own times. See chap. 7. 2.

To see what he would call them, c. 2. 19.] Here the famous Axiom of the Rabbines takes place, *Loquitur lex ut filij hominum*, for God did not want the help of *Adam* to give names to the Beasts. Perhaps this was not done in the compass of one day, if as some believe, *Adam* viewed all the several sorts of Animals, neither is it credible that all the Creatures in the Universe, both wild and tame, and all the Fishes, were brought before *Adam* to receive their names. In all appearance those Beasts and Fowls that are peculiar to *America*, never came upon this Errand, neither will any one I believe, presume that the Fishes quitted their Element for this purpose. We have already observed in our Dissertation upon the Flood, that the word *all* is frequently applied to signify some certain kinds, but not *omnia genera*, and there-

therefore we may suppose that with *Eve's* Consent *Adam* bestowed particular names upon some of the tamer and most common Animals in *Syria*. For what occasion had *Adam* for Speech and Names of things, so long as he was alone? Therefore the order to be neglected here, as it frequently is; see *ch. i. v. 5, 8, 10.*

Now because this is related in a few words, we must not therefore conclude, that it was transacted in a few hours, and therefore we lie under no necessity to affirm with some Interpreters, that by a miraculous and extraordinary Effect of the Divine Power all sorts of living Creatures came in troops to *Adam* to have names bestowed upon them. 'Tis more agreeable to reason to believe that words were invented by degrees, and that these Animals received their names as our first Parents happen'd to behold them, or to talk of them.

And whatsoever Adam called every living Creature, that was the name thereof, ibid.] The Rabbines pretend that these names were given them in the Hebrew Tongue; but how precariously this is affirmed, we have plainly shown in our Dissertation about the Hebrew Tongue. Perhaps *Moses* designed to hint in this place that the Invention of a Language, which is of such absolute necessity to all the affairs of humane Life, was one of the first cares of our first Parents: or perhaps the Sovereignty of Man over the Beasts, is intimated by this bestowing of names upon them. Whence among

among the Eastern People those that had new Masters, had new names given them by them, as *Josepb* from *Pbaraoh*, *Gen.* 41. 45. *Eliakim* King of *Judah* from *Pharoah Necha*, *2 Chron.* c. 36. 4. And *Daniel* and his Companions, by *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 1. 7. The Rabbines likewise, and some of the Interpreters, pretend that *Adam* bestow'd these names with great Sagacity and Wisdom; from whence they conclude, that he was acquainted with their different natures, as *Bochart* endeavours to show, *Hieroz. part 1. lib. 1. cap. 9.* But that Learned Man takes it for granted all along, that *Adam* spoke Hebrew, such as we find it in the holy Volumes, which as we have already observed, is doubtful. Besides, those names are sometimes taken from something remarkable obvious in the Animals, which any one might have discovered at first sight. In short, most of the Reasons of the Hebrew names are supported by very slight Conjectures, and are by no means to be obtruded as certainly true, upon such as are well skilled in these matters: nor to repeat what we said before, that but few of the Animals had names immediately given them, but only as our first Parents took notice of them, or knew them by frequent Experiments.

And he took one of his ribs, c. 2. 21.] From this, or some such sort of a Narration among the Orientals, *Plato* in *Eusebius's* Opinion, *Præp. Evang. l. 12. c. 12.* seems to have taken what he

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writes concerning the nature of the first Man, in his *Symposian*, where he supposes that he was at first ἀνδρόγυνος, both Man and Woman growing together, and that this Animal afterwards was divided into two parts, one of which became a Man, and the other a Woman. The ancient Rabbines reading this Passage in *Plato*, as they were always fond of Monsters and Prodigies; they soon liked it, and endeavoured to countenance this strange Opinion by some places of Scripture absurdly applied, as particularly c. 12. *Male and Female he created them*. Now that this Doctrine was first borrowed from *Plato*, and afterwards crusted over with the Authority of the Bible to recommend it the better, we shall be soon convinced if we consider that the Rabbines had several other Opinions of the same nature, which they took originally out of this Philosopher, and then published them as if they had taken them out of the Scriptures, as the notion of the Transmigration of Souls, and the like. Therefore we have no reason to wonder, as the Learned *Grotius* does, that the Rabbinical Expositions agree so well with *Plato's* Doctrine. Thus we see the Christian Interpreters frequently expound the Scripture, so as to make it support the Hypothesis of the ancient or modern Philosophers.

And were not ashamed, c. 2. 25.] We use to blush when we are discovered committing something which is in its own nature evil, and consequently

frequently unlawful; or when we do something which is indeed lawful, but not in such a manner or at such a time. Neither of which cou'd be said to be here, for neither is it immoral to go without Cloaths, neither if it is unlawful to do so before others, is it unlawful before ones Wife alone. 'Tis therefore somewhat strange how our first Parents should afterwards be ashamed of the Nakedness, when there were no more in the World but themselves.

Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering, ch. 4. 3.] *Grotius* thinks this was done by no positive Command of God, but merely by the Dictates of nature, which suggested to him, that as a conspicuous Respect was to be paid to his Maker, so he was obliged to shew it by offering those things to him which are most esteemed by Men. Several ancient Christians and Jews were of the same Opinion, as *Outram* in his Treatise *De Sacrificijs*, l. 1. c. 1. has shown. But others assign the Original of Sacrifices to an express Command of God; which I am the easier inclined to believe, because that in the beginning of the World, after our first Parents were guilty of so notorious a Defection, Mankind in all probability was too rude and ignorant to find out of themselves, that the Benificence and Power of God was to be acknowledged by these external Ceremonies. God who, ἡμεῖς αὐτοὺς αὐτοὺς ἐπιστῶν, *sed*
V 2 *them*

them, and was their Governor, as Plato speaks of the Men of the Golden Age, seems to have taught them these Rites, least in process of time they should forget their Creator.

Of the firstlings of the flock, and the fat thereof, ch. 4. 4.] Since eating of Flesh seems to have been unknown before the Flood, therefore Grotius supposes that no Victims were sacrificed, because *nihil deo sacrari solet, nisi quod in usu sit hominum*. As this reason is by no means to be rejected, so he omits another of no less importance, which is brought from the Scarcity of Creatures. In the beginning there were but small numbers of Oxen, Sheep and Goats, and therefore it is scarce credible that the munificent Lord of the Universe wou'd have them lessened merely for his own honour, since it wou'd be so prejudicial to Mankind. For the same reason Triptolemeus enacted a Law, *Ζῶα μὴ ὀνέδῃ*, that no Animals should be hurt; *θεὸς καὶ ἀνθρώποις ἀγαλλεῖν*, to worship the Gods with the fruits of the Earth. Long after him Draco commanded the same, for which consult Porphyrius de *Abstinentia*, l. 4. Varro de R. R. l. 2. c. 4. speaking of the Oxe; *hic socius hominum in rustico opere, & cereres Minister. Ab hoc Antiqui manus ita abstinere voluerunt, ut capite sanxerint, si quis occidisset. Quā in re testis Attice, testis Peloponneses.*

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To come now to *Abel's Oblation*, since the Hebrew *bhalab* signifies *Milk* as well as *Fat*; I should chuse to render it by the former, and believe that by a common *ἑν δὲ δυνάμει*, with the Hebrews, *Abel brought of the firstlings of his Flock, and of the Milk thereof*, is put instead of, *Abel brought of the Milk of the firstlings of his flock*. 'Tis credible that God wou'd have them signify by this Rite that the increase of all Creatures was owing to him: And perhaps for the same reason the *Ægyptians* offer'd Milk to their Deities, See *Diod. Bibl. lib. 1.*

A Fugitive, and a Vagabond shalt thou be, ch. 4. 12.] It may not be amiss here to observe that amongst the *Græcians* and other People, in the earliest times of Antiquity, Murder was punished with Banishment. Thus *Medon* the Brother of *Ajax* was banished to *Phylace*.

—Γαῖος ἀπὸ παλαιοῦς ἀνδρὲς καὶ λαοῦς.

Far from his native Country having killed a Man] Several Examples of this nature *Feithius* has collected in his *Antiqu. Homer, l. 2, cap. 8.* And as the Learned *Spelman* has observed in the time of the *Saxons*, it was not punished with Death here in *England*.

Shem, Ham, and Japhet, c. 5. 32.] Tho' we read that *Noah* begot these three Sons, after

ter he was five hundred years old, yet it is not mentioned which of them is the eldest. However, we may gather that the Rights of Primogeniture belonged to *Japhet*, from *Gen. 11. 10.* *Shem was a hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad, two years after the flood*; that is, in the sixth hundred and second year of *Noah*, for the Deluge fell out in the sixth hundred completely. And therefore *Shem* was born to *Noah* when he was five hundred and two years old, and consequently was not his first-begotten, since he began to get Children when he was five hundred years old. And as for *Ham* he is expressly said, *Gen. 9. 24.* to be the youngest; Whence it necessarily follows, that *Japhet* was the eldest, who is therefore, tho' by the bye, called *Shem's* elder Brother, *Gen. 10. 21.*

Nevertheless, either because the Nation of the Hebrews was descended from *Shem*, or because the Rights of Primogeniture were transferred to him, though the sacred History takes no notice of it; he is both here, and sometimes below, nominated first, as several Learned Men have imagined. And thus *Abraham's* Name is mentioned before his Brother's, *chap. 11. 26.* *Jacob's* before *Esaú*, *chap. 28. 5.* and *Ephraim's* before *Manasseh*, *chap. 48. 20.* I wish they had informed us why *Ham* the youngest is reckoned the second in order, and *Japhet* last though he was the first-begotten, both here and *chap. 7. 13.* *chap. 9. 18.*

9. 18. chap. 10. 1. and elsewhere. 'Tis certain that in his Father's Blessing, chap. 9. 27. *Japhet* is unquestionably preferred to *Ham*. But perhaps in all these Matters we are more curious than we need; and indeed in the reckoning up of the Generations, chap. 10. *Japhet* is placed first, and *Shem* the last. After the same manner *Jacob*, who is generally set before *Esau*, is named after him, chap. 35. 29. And *Jacob gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his Sons, Esau and Jacob buried him.*

Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee, chap. 7. 2.] Those Creatures seem first to be called *clean*, which those that call'd them so, fed upon; as on the other hand, those were called *unclean*, from which they abstain'd; for whatever reasons they did it, 'tis certain there is no *Cleanness* or *Uncleanness* in the Animals themselves, as the different use of different Nations sufficiently testifies. After the Mosaical Law there was a twofold Cleanness and Uncleanness in Animals; for only three sorts of clean Quadrupeds, and two of Birds, were allowed in Sacrifices, *Lev. 1, 2. 14.* whereas several more were permitted to be eaten; see *Levit. 11.* But it is doubted whether this Distinction was known in *Noah's* time, because 'tis highly probable that no sort of Flesh was eaten before the Flood. Those that maintain the Affirmative, ground themselves

upon this Text. However, though God Almighty is here introduced speaking in a direct Oration, according to the Genius of the Oriental Languages; yet it is not manifest that he used these very terms. Perhaps he commanded *Noah* to take Sevens of such Creatures as were wholesome for Food, which are here called *clean*, and only pairs of those that were unwholesome. And perhaps after all, the sacred Writer who has all along a greater regard to the Sense than the bare words, accommodates himself to the Language of his own times.

And Noah went in and his Sons, chap. 7. 7.] As *Noah* either had no more Children than these before the Deluge, or if he had, they were not alive: so likewise his Sons either had begot no Children before it happened, or else had buried them. Whatever side the Reader chooses, it is evident from hence, that Mankind before the Flood had not peopled many Countries. For if *Noah's* Family, when he was six hundred years old, only consisted of three Sons who had no issue, we may probably suppose that several more had not a more numerous Off-spring.

Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat to you, ch. 9. 3.] Before the Deluge Man had so far a right over the living Creatures, that he might make use of their Milk, their Wool and their Skins, in case they happen'd to die,
and

and while they were alive, might employ them to draw or carry his Burdens, but was not allowed to feed upon them. Otherwise it had been in vain to have given *Noah* a Permission here to do what was lawful for him before; and besides, *Moses* expressly tells us, *chap. 29.* that Herbs and Fruits were given to the Antidiluvians for Meat. I shall not stay to confute some Theological or Philosophical Conjectures which oppose this Exposition, since they cannot be admitted without committing violence upon the Mosaical History.

And told Abraham the Hebrew, c. 14. 13.] Some are of opinion that this is a Patronymic Appellation derived from *Heber*, who is reckon among *Abraham's* Ancestors, *ch. 11. 14.* But the Scripture no where tells us why the Hebrews should rather take their name from him than from any one else. 'Tis certain that *Abraham* might with as much, nay with more pretence have been called the *Therachite* or *Nachorite*; and we have already shown in our first Dissertation, that what the Rabbines impudently tell us of *Heber's* great Piety, and his preserving the ancient Religion and Language in his Family, is a groundless Fiction. Therefore others suppose it is derived from the Preposition *Heber*, which signifies *on the other side*, because *Abraham* was born on the other side the *Euphrates*, and passed that River to come

come into *Canaan*. Of this Opinion were the LXX. who have translated it *περάτω*, and *Origen* upon *Matthew*, *ἑβραῖοι, οἵτινες ἐγμνήσθησαν περάτικοι*. The same likewise was the Judgment of *St. Jerome*, whose words upon the 7th Chapter of *Ezekiel* are as follows; *Abraham Hebræus, i. e. περάτης, & peregrinus, transitorq; memoratur*. Now the reason why this Appellation was not given to the Edomites, or the other Descendants of *Lot* and *Abraham*, but only to *Abraham's* Posterity by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, is, because the first was really born beyond the *Euphrates*, and the second fetched him a Wife from thence, as refusing to enter into such an Alliance with the *Canaanites*, whom in this particular *Jacob* followed, who likewise lived a great part of his Life on the other side of that River.

Thou shalt go to thy Fathers in Peace, ch. 15. 15.] This is a common Periphrasis of Death, like these in Latin, *ire ad plures, ire in communem locum*. *R. Salomon* concludes from hence, that *Therah* who was an Idolater, repented before he died, and that his Soul went to the Mantions of the Blessed, because it is here said, that *Abraham* who was a pious Man, and acceptable to God, shou'd go to him. But *St. Jerome* has rightly observed, that this Expression is not to be depended upon, since the Good and Bad when they die, are equally said
to

to go to their Fathers. The Hebrews likewise mean the same thing by this Phrase, *to be gathered to his People*; which is used concerning *Abraham*, ch. 25. 8. but can be urged no more than the former, since 'tis plain that neither was *Abraham* buried with his Country-men the Chaldeans; but purchased himself a Monument in *Canaan*: Neither can his Soul be said when it quitted his Body, to be in the same condition with that of the Chaldean Idolaters. However, these Phrases (whatever the Signification of them might afterwards be) seem to take their Original from such like Opinion as this, *viz.* that the Souls of the Dead go to some certain Receptracles, where every Nation and Family live apart by themselves. *Ezekiel*, ch. 32. v. 22. and the following Verses, seems to allude to this Opinion, *Asbur is there, and all her Company, &c.*

And he lift up his Eyes, and looked, and lo three Men stood by him, ch. 18. 2.] Some pretend that these were three Angels in humane shape; one of whom, as being chief of the Embassy, came to *Abraham*, and the other two went to carry God's Commands to *Lot*. But others are of Opinion, that he who is called *Jehovah*, v. 13, 14, 17, 20, 22. and whom *Abraham* calls *the Judges of the Earth*, v. 25. 27. was the second Person of the holy Trinity. But as these People make the Divinity assume

a humane shape upon trivial grounds, not altogether so becoming the Divine Majesty, so they have none of the Jews that lived in the Apostolical times to countenance their Opinion. 'Tis certain, that if *Abraham* did really entertain the highest God, the Exhortation of the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *ch. 13. 2.* is one of the coldest things in the World, *Be not forgetful to entertain Strangers, for thereby some have entertained Angels unawares.* He ought to have added, *nay and God himself*, which had made his Argument much more efficacious. However, these ancient Stories of the Angels travelling up and down the Earth in humane shapes, seem to have given occasion to the Opinion of the Pagans, that the Gods used to visit Mankind. Thus one of *Penelope's* Suiters in the *Odysses*, blames *Antinous* for striking *Ulysses*, *because*, says he, *the Gods are accustomed to travel thro' Towns and Cities in the Disguise of Guests, to behold the Manners and Behaviour of Mortals.* See *Acts 14, 11.* Now it was not the Custom of Travellers at this time to knock at the Door, or to speak to those Persons first by whom they hoped to be entertained: But they only stood in the High-way, waiting till they were called, and at their departure used to receive a *Viaticum* from their Host, to support them upon the Road. For in those Ages there were no Inns in the Eastern Countries, no more than

than there are now a days, except a few *Kervanfera's*, as they call them, for the Reception of Strangers; so that they must either lye all night in the Streets if they came to any Town, or else lye in some Body's House who was so kind as to receive them. A remarkable Instance of this we find in *Judges*, ch. 19. 15. Thus likewise among the Greeks and Romans, though in the latter Ages they had Inns and Victualing Houses, yet formerly they had none. Hence came the Fashion of lodging in private Houses, and hence Hospitality came to be so much commended. Upon which Argument consult *Tomasinus de Tesseris*.

And Abraham there called on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God, ch. 21. 33.] Perhaps the sacred Historian added this Epithet here, to distinguish the true God, whom *Abraham* worshipped, from those Divinities that were sometimes born, and were to dye at last. If *Philo Byblius's Sanctioniathon* was a faithful Expositor of the Phœnician Theology, those People only own'd two Gods to be eternal, and held that the rest were generated; for after that manner does he explain their Doctrine in *Eusebius, Dem. Evang. l. 1. c. 10. He teaches that the first Principle of all things was a dark dusky Air full of Wind, or the breath of a dusky Air, and a turbid Chaos,*
encom-

encompassed with Darknefs : That these were eternal, and had not an end in many Ages. And afterwards relates the Generations of the Gods, who alone were worshipt. The Grecians believed that the Nymphs were born with Oaks, and that they died along with them ; and perhaps they borrowed this Opinion from the Oriental Nations, as they did several more. Thus we find in *Plutarch, de Oracul. Defectu*, that *Cleombrotus* supposes those Deities that had been the Presidents of Oracles formerly to be dead ; upon which follows the famous Story of the Death of *Pan the Great*, and other Relations of that nature ; by which it appears that the Nymphs and Dæmons, or their Gods of the lower rank, was commonly believed to be mortal, altho' they were long-lived. Therefore *Abraham* seems to have opposed the everlasting God, who had no beginning, and who is capable of no end ; to some such sort of an Opinion received by the Eastern People.

And there was set Meat before him to eat, but he said, I will not eat till I have told my Errand.] In the ancient times it was usual to receive Strangers, and entertain them with a Repast, before they asked them any Questions. Thus after *Nestor* had given a plentiful Meal to *Telemachus*, *Odysses*, l. 3. and the other had eaten as much as was sufficient, then

then at last the old Gentleman thought it high time to examine him: 'Tis best to ask News of Strangers, says he,

ἐπεὶ μέγιστον ἰδιώτης,

i. e. after they have filled their Bellies. Nay, sometimes several days pass'd over their Heads, before they thought fit to lay down the occasion of their coming. Thus *Esdra* and his Companions, who brought the Vessels belonging to the Temple, staid three days in Jerusalem, before they restored them to the Priests. Thus, *Iliad*. 8. *Homer* tells us that the King of *Lycia* entertained *Bellerophon* for nine days successively, and that when the tenth Morning appear'd, he began to ask him Questions. *Dares Phrygius* speaking of *Antenor*, who was sent Ambassador to *Peleus*, tells us, that the latter well-comed him for the space of three days, but on the fourth enquired upon what Message he came; *Die quarto rogat eum quid venerit*. After the same manner *Laban* here took *Abraham's* Servant within doors, and set some Meat before him, though he had no Acquaintance with him, and asked him no Questions; but the other finding that God had directly sent him to *Abraham's* Relations, was in pain till he had delivered his Errand.

Tell

Tell me I pray thee thy name, ch. 32. 22.]
 Some Interpreters suspect that *Jacob* knew his Antagonist, with whom he wrestled, to be an Angel, because he desired him to bless him; but then this Passage makes them at a stand: for how cou'd he imagine to be a jot the better after he knew the Angel's name. We are desirous to know the names of those, with whom we have any dealing, because when we once know that, we may find out who, and what manner of Men they are, by enquiring of those that are better acquainted with them. But since there is no Correspondence between us and the Angels, after we know the names of two or three of them, we know them no more than we did before. Thus *Manoah*, who took the Angel that appear'd to him for a Prophet, desires him to tell him his name, and subjoins this reason for it, that *when thy Sayings are come to pass, we may do thee honour*; that is, give thee all the respect that is usually paid to a Prophet. 'Tis true indeed, that the Jews and the other Eastern People, talked much of the names of Angels in the following times; but 'tis scarce credible that in *Jacob's* days such Notions were current, nor do we find the least footstep of them in the Bible before *Daniel*.

Ask

Ask me never so much Dowry and Gift,
 ch. 34. 12.] It was the Fashion of that Age
 for the Suitor to offer Presents to the young
 Woman's Parents, as appears plainly by this
 Passage. Thus also in the Heroical times,
quorum mores, says our Author, *multa Orien-*
talibus habent similia, among the Greeks, the
 Son-in-law that was to be paid his *Idon*, to
 the Father of the Girl, which we learn from
 several places of *Homer*, collected by *Feisth-*
us, in his *Antiquitates Homericae*, l. 2. c. 11.
 As for instance, in the *Odyssees*, where *Val-*
can is said to find *Mars* in very scurvy Cir-
 cumstances with his Wife, and to chain them
 both to their good Behaviour, he protests he
 will not release them, till her Father returns
 every farthing of the Portion he gave him for
 his Harlot of a Daughter, because she was hand-
 som. Hence *Aristotle*, *Polit.* l. 2. c. 8. relating
 the most ancient Manners of the Greeks, tells
 us among other things, that they purchased
 their Wives of one another. At this day the
 same is practised by the Turks and Persians.
 See *Thevenot's Travels*, l. 1. c. 41.

And they gave unto Jacob all the strange
Gods, and all their Ear-rings, c. 35. 4.] There
 were two sorts of Ear-rings, one of which
 were chiefly worn by the Women for Orna-
 ment

ment sake, but are not meant in this place ; the other were esteemed sacred, and the Men used to wear them as an Amulet to preserve them from all harm. Perhaps too some figures were ingraven upon them under a certain Constellation, after the manner of Talismans, which the Idolatrous People fondly imagined to have great Efficacy in them. Among the Carthaginians, not only the free men, but their very Slaves had their Ears loaded with Rings. *Plautus in Pœnulo, Act 5. sc. 2.* Speaking of the *Pœnic* Slaves, introduces *Milphio* thus discoursing with *Agorastocles* ;

I suppose these Fellows are troubled with no such things as Fingers,

AG. Why so ? *MC.* Because they carry their Rings in their Ears.

These Rings hung down from the top of the Ear, as appears from *St. Austin*, in whose time this Superstition still continued among some *African* Christians. These are his words, in *Epist. 73.* *Execranda autem superstitio ligaturarum, in quibus etiam in aures virorum in summis ex una parte auriculis suspensæ deputantur, sed ad serviendum Dæmonibus adhibetur.* These Rings, in his Questions upon this place, he calls the *Phylacteries of Idols*. *Jacob's* Servants here seem to have carried such sort of Rings

Rings in their Ears, which he commanded them to lay aside, as being consecrated to strange Gods.

And they sate down to eat, ch. 37. v. 25.] After the manner of the Oriental People, who used to lay a Carpet upon the Floor, and so sate down to eat, which Custom still continues, and when they were in the Country either sate upon the green Grass, or upon the Skin of some Beast. Among the ancient Persians, their Kings seem to have observed the same Posture, as appears by *Darius's Table*, which was so low, that when *Alexander* sate upon *Cyrus's Throne*, it served him for a Footstool. For thus *Curtius*, l. 5. c. 2. tells us, that afterwards he sate in the Royal Throne, which was much too high for him, and as his Feet did not touch the lowest Step, one of the King's Pages put a Table under them; which a little below is said to be the same where *Darius* dined. *Homer's Heroes* too sate at their Meat, but upon Seats.

I will go down into the Grave to my Sen, ch. 37. v. 35.] In the Hebrew 'tis *Scholab*. The LXX have rendred it *ἐκ ἀδου*, and the Vulgar *in infernum*. This word and the ancient Translations of it, have not a little employ'd the Interpreters of the Old and New

Testament. We shall set down the undoubted Significations of it as briefly as we can, and then enquire in what Sense it is here to be taken. In the first place it signifies any place below the Superficies of the Earth, whether made hollow by Art or Nature. Hence *Isaiah* metaphorically uses it to denote a low and mean Condition, *ch.* 14. 11. and for the same reason *Jonas* calls the Fish's Belly by the same name. Secondly, it is taken for a Grave or Sepulchre, *Is.* 14. 15. where the King of *Babylon* is said to be brought down to *Hell*, to the sides of the Pit; which words are there set down as Synonimes. See likewise, *Psalms* 141. 7. In the third place it does not so much seem to signify the Grave, as the State of the Dead, or the Place where they are poetically feign'd to rest, and discourse together. Thus in the 14th Chapter of *Isaiah*, the King of *Babylon*, who is expressly said, *v.* 19, 20. to be cast out of the Grave, and to be denied a Burial, is yet in the ninth Verse supposed to go *Scholab* to *Hell*, where the Dead come to meet him. *Hell* (*Schol*) from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the Dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the Earth; it has raised up from their Thrones all the Kings of the Nations: All they shall speak, &c. See *Ezekiel*, *ch.* 32. And by this word is meant not the Man-

Mansions of the happy, such as the Elysian Fields, or the fortunate Islands, were among the Grecians, but the common Receptacle of the Dead in general, as appears not only by the above-mentioned places, but *Job, c. 2. 17. ch. 10. 21.* and several other Passages of the Old Testament. Now 'tis past dispute that it is not here to be taken in the first Signification; so that the Question is, Whether *Jacob* meant the Grave, or else the Place and State of the Dead? It cannot be pretended that he meant the former; for how could he say, *I will go down into the Grave to my Son*, since he did not believe him to be buried, but to be torn to pieces by a wild Beast? Therefore we must understand it of the Place or State of the Dead, as the LXX Interpreters have done, who have rendred it *καταβήσμαι πρὸς τὸ υἱὸν μου πρὸς εἰς ᾧδε*; and the Vulgar, *Descendam ad filium meum lugens in infernum*. But what Sentiments *Jacob* had of that State or Receptacle of the Deceased, no Circumstances out of History inform us, nor can we safely judge of his, by our own Opinion upon that matter.

You are Spies, to see the Nakedness of the Land are you came, ch. 42. 9.] This Suspicion of *Joseph* was so much the more plausible, because his Brothers came from those

parts, by which alone *Ægypt* is accessible on the side of *Asia*. This is the only place, says *Herodotus*, l. 3. c. 5. where *Ægypt* can be openly enter'd; where he relates at large how *Cambyfes* invaded it, and marched with his Army this way. Consult but *Ptolomy's* Tables, and the matter appears plain enough. It was on all sides secured from the hostile Incurſions of the *Africans*, if we may believe *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. 1. Bibl. by large unpaſſable Deſerts. The Sea which lies to the Northwards of it, is ſhallow and deſtitute of Harbours, ſo that it did not fear an Invaſion from that quarter: Only on the Eaſtern Frontier it lay open and unguarded. For this reaſon *Sefoſtris*, to ſecure this Paſs againſt the Irruptions of the *Syrians* and *Arabians*, fortified it with a Wall fifteen hundred furlongs in length, which reached from *Peluſum* to *Heliopolis*, *Diod. lib. 1. p. 52.* and upon the ſame account perhaps it was that *Nero* the Son of *Pſammetichus*, King of *Ægypt*, drew a Trench from the *Peluſiac* Arm of the *Nile*, to the Gulf of *Arabia*, and endeavoured to joyn the *Mediterranean* to the Southern Sea.

They knew not that Joſeph underſtood them, for he ſpoke unto them by an Interpreter, ch. 42. 23.] Although the *Ægyptian* and *Hebrew* Language nearly reſembled one another, yet

yet there might be that difference between them, as the *Canaanites* and the *Aegyptians* could not understand one another in ordinary Discourse. Thus we see the French don't understand the Italians or Spaniards, although these three Languages are derived from the Latin; and thus in the time of the Kings, the Jews did not commonly understand the Chaldean Tongue, as appears from 2 *Kings*, ch. 18. v. 26. Now 'tis evident from this place, that *Jacob's* Sons spoke in the *Canaanitish* Language, unless we would rather suppose them to speak Chaldee, and not a Tongue which was only peculiar to one Family, as the Rabbines pretend: for then how had it been possible to have procured an Interpreter, unless we suppose that one of *Jacob's* Servants had run away from his Master, and fled into *Aegypt*, of which we don't find the least mention.

They sat before him, the first-born according to his Birth-right, and the youngest according to his Youth; and he took and sent Messes unto them, but Benjamin's Mess was five times so much as any of the rest, ch. 43. v. 33.] Though we have no account in any Profane Authors of the Customs used by the Ancients at their Feasts, which equal this in Antiquity, yet it may receive some Illustration

from what we find in *Homer*. In the first place *Homer's* Heroes did not sit down promiscuously, as we do about our round Tables, but every Man according to his Quality, or the Respect which the Master of the Feast was minded to show him. Thus *Hector* upbraids *Diomedes* when he run away, that the Grecians honour'd him with a Seat and Flesh, and full Cups.

Ἐδεν τι, κρείον τι, ἰδὲ πλείους διαπλάσι.

The *Ides* here seems to be the *περιδεῖα*, as *Basilinius* has remarked upon this place, that is, the Chief Seat at Table. Secondly, 'tis evident that in the Heroical times they used long Tables, or *perpetuæ mensæ*, as *Virgil* calls them: So that the most honourable Seat was consequently at the upper end, where we may suppose *Reuben* sat, and his other Brethren below him, according to their Age. Thirdly, as here in *Moses*, so we find in *Homer* that each of the Guests had his equal Dividend of Meat, unless a greater Portion was bestowed upon any one of them, to show him more Honour. For this reason, as *Atbenæus* informs us, l. ii. *Homer* calls them *δὲνας τῶνας*, or equal Feasts. In short, as it appears from the above-mentioned place in *Homer*, where mention is made of *Diomedes*, that

that he had a larger share of Victuals allow'd him upon the score of his Valour; so *Joseph* ordered *Benjamin* to be treated after this manner, *honoris causâ*.

The Cup whereby my Lord divineth, chap. 44. 5.] The sacred Volumes no where take notice of any Divination perform'd by a Cup; and what several Learned Men have told us of the Effusion of Wine in the Jewish Sacrifices out of a Cup, is nothing to the purpose, since it does not at all appear that they gathered any Auguries that way. The ancient Grecians indeed made a Judgement of future Events by the noise of the Wine poured out in honour of the Divinity, and before their Libations pray'd to the Gods to send them some auspicious Signs. Sometimes too they threw this Wine into the Fire, and the greater the Flame was, so much the better was the Omen. We find in 2 *Samuel* 23. 16. that Water was sometimes poured out unto the Lord; but the Scripture in no place informs us that the Jews gather'd any Omens from thence. And therefore as the Greeks borrow'd great part of their Religious Rites from the Egyptians, 'tis probable that the latter, observed the same Method in their Libations, and that *Joseph* had a respect to them here.

honoris

That

That you may dwell in the Land of Goshen, ch. 46. 34.] 'Tis unquestionable that the Land of *Goshen* was situate in the Lower *Ægypt*, as also that it was the first Province or *Nomus*, which a Traveller coming out *Syria* enters, since *Jacob* so soon as he came thither, sent to acquaint *Joseph* with the news of his Arrival. By this place it appears, that it was famous for rich Pastures, otherwise it wou'd ne're have been offer'd to a Company of Shepherds, as the most convenient place in the Kingdom for them. 'Tis likewise certain, that this Tract of Land was appropriated to the *Ægyptian* Shepherds, who lived separate from the rest of their Country-men: For otherwise how cou'd *Joseph* conclude, that this Province wou'd be assigned to his Brethren immediately, upon their discovering what Occupation they followed, unless it was the Custom of that Nation so to do? As will plainly appear by the following words.

For every Shepherd is an Abomination to the Ægyptians, ch. 46. 34.] Learned Men are used to enquire upon this place the first, whether it appears by any Testimony out of Prophane Authors, that the *Ægyptians* avoided the Company of Shepherds? The second,

second, for what reason they hated them? As for what regards the former, we don't here mean all Shepherds in general, but only such as fed *Sheep* or *Goats*. According to *Herodotus*, l. 2. c. 164. the *Ægyptians* were divided into seven Classes, *Priests*, *Soldiers*, *Cow-herds*, *Hog-herds*, *Merchants*, *Interpreters*, and *Sea-men*. As for the *Cow-herds*, we no where find that the *Ægyptians* despised them, but the above-cited Historian expressly affirms so much of the *Hog-herds*, ch. 47. where he tells us, that the rest of the *Ægyptians* refused to have any Alliances with them. Among the *Mendesians*, if we may believe him, *Goat-herds* lived in great reputation, because they worshipped *Goats*. But these same People that looked upon it to be a hainous Sin to sacrifice *Goats*, thought it no Crime to serve *Sheep* after that manner. The contrary to which was observed by the *Thebans*, as we find in the same Author. So far *Herodotus*, who is more particular in this Affair than any one else; however, he does not seem to consist with himself, for since he makes two different Ranks of his *Hog-herds* and *Cow-herds*, why does he not farther branch them out into *Goat-herds* and *Shep-herds*? &c. with much more reason on his side. *Diodorus* comprehends them all under the name of

of *Νομῖται*, or *Pastors*, but does not acquaint us in what Credit they lived with the other *Ægyptians*.

Now with Submission to Persons of greater Learning, I am of Opinion that as the *Ægyptian* Superstition varied with respect to Time and Place; so that eating of Sheep was held unlawful in the *Tanitic* Kingdom in *Joseph's* time, and that as the Shepherds did either really feed upon them, or at least were suspected to do so, the rest of the *Ægyptians* shun'd their Company. Thus they thought they contracted an Impurity if they kissed a *Grecian*, because the latter made no difficulty to eat Cow's Flesh, which Animal was mightily ador'd in *Ægypt*. For this reason they cou'd not be brought to use so much as a Knife or a Kettle, if it came out of *Greece*, out of a fear that the Flesh of a Cow might have been cut by the former, or boiled in the latter. Though we are told by *Herodotus* that the *Mendesians* used to sacrifice, and consequently to eat Sheep; yet at the same time he informs us, that the *Thebans*, who had a much greater Authority in the Country, abstained from it: and *Diodorus*, lib. 1. p. 99. reckons Sheep among those Creatures from which the *Ægyptians* abstained. Besides those private Reasons which the Priests assign'd for this Abstinence,

stinence, he says the following ones were used to be given, *viz.* that Sheep brought forth Young twice a year, that they clothed Mankind with their Wool, and nourished them with Milk and Cheese. And therefore since several of the Egyptians either for these, or some other Reasons, abstained from Sheeps Flesh, what wonder is it if they expressed an utter Aversion to those Men whom they knew, or else suspected to feed upon it, if they shun'd their Conversion, and obliged to live by themselves in a particular Tract of their Country? Indeed some Learned Men doubt whether we can discover any certain Tokens of Idolatry in *Ægypt* so early as the days of *Joseph*, but what they pretend they can no where find; this *Moses* expressly teaches us, *Exod.* 8. 26. and the Israelites became infected with Idolatry in *Ægypt*, as *Ezekiel* lays it to their charge, *ch.* 20. v. 7, 8.

And Joseph placed his father and his brethren in the land of Rameses, ch. 46. 11.] Here cannot be signified that City, which is said, *Ex.* 1. 11. to be built long after the Death of *Joseph* by the Israelites; nor indeed had these People, who lived under Tents and removed from one Place to another, any occasion for a City at first: Therefore others understand it to be part of the Country of *Goshen*.
The

318 *Several obscure Texts, &c.*

The Conjecture of the learned Sir *John Marsham* seems to be the best grounded, who supposes it to be the Name of a King, and used in the Genitive Case. For *Diodorus* tells us, that the third part of all *Egypt* belonged to the King, and therefore 'tis all one as if *Moses* had said, that part of the Lands belonging to the Crown was granted to *Jacob* and his Family. The abovementioned ingenious Author has proved out of *Syncellus*, that *Rameesses Tubaces* reign'd at that time in *Egypt*, upon *Sæcul*, VII.

Dissertation

Dissertation XIII.

Concerning the Passage of the Israelites thro' the Red Sea.

I. *The Occasion of this Dissertation.* II. *The Division thereof.* III. *An Explication of the Words of Moses, and an Enquiry into the Time when the Wind, which divided the Sea, began to blow, that the Israelites might go over the Sea in a short time.* IV. *That the Wind increased the Reflux of the Sea towards the Ocean, and divided not the Waters, so as to heap them up on both sides, as 'tis commonly believed. How easily this could be done.* V. *That the Wind, which drove the Waters towards the Ocean, was a North-Wind.* VI. *That Josephus understood it so, when he compared the Passage of the Israelites with Alexander's Passage through the shores of the Sea of Pamphylia; to which he might have added a noble Exploit of P. Scipio.* VII. *This Opinion is confirm'd by the Circumstances of the Death of the Egyptians.* VIII. *The Memory of that Passage,*

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Passage, preserved among the Ichthyophagi. A Tale out of Paulus Orosius. IX. That the Passage of the Israelites was a true Miracle. X. The Conclusion.

I. **M**EN are so fond of *Prodigies*, as to believe often without any Reason, that God alter'd the ordinary Course of Nature; of which I have given a pregnant Instance, in my Dissertation concerning *the Statue of Salt*. Tho' such an Opinion ought not to be approv'd, because it fills the Minds of Men with a superstitious Credulity, exposes the Sacred History to the Contempt and Laughter of Profane Men, and makes them disbelieve true Miracles and Prodigies; yet we ought to bear with those who entertain it, because if they add something to the Scripture, they take nothing from it; and because their Opinion arises from a Mind inclin'd to ascribe whatever is Great and Wonderful to the Divine Power. But those who put a false Interpretation upon true and manifest Miracles, and dare ascribe every thing to the ordinary Course of Nature, can't be endured, for they came by this Opinion out of Obstinacy and Pride, which Vices allow them not to admire any thing, or believe any that's unusual and extraordinary. It may be said further, that because they dare not openly deny some Facts grounded upon very good Reasons, and undeniable Testimonies, they endeavour to under-
mine

Israelites through the Red Sea. 321

mine the belief of them, whilst they can hardly confess, that any thing happens above the ordinary Course of Nature.

Omitting for the present what may be said concerning Prodigies and Miracles in general, I shall endeavour to vindicate one of them from the Cavils of some Men, by giving a clear Explanation of it. I mean the Passage of the *Israelites* through the *Red Sea* upon the dry Ground, as *Moses* relates it, *Exod. 14*. Those who affirm, that all this happened according to the ordinary Course of Nature, say, that *Moses*, who knew that Country well, observed the time of the Tide, and that the Sea retiring back, as it is wont to do, he might easily go from one Shoar to another upon the dry ground; and that being a Cunning Man, he vented among the ignorant Multitude, as a Prodigy what happened according to the ordinary Laws of Nature. Were it not so, say they, the *Egyptians* had not gone boldly into the Sea as as well as the *Israelites*; and they had not been so bold as to follow them, if they had seen the Sea divided by a Miracle, lest he who had divided the Waters of the Sea, only for the sake of the *Israelites*, should bring them back into their Channel, to destroy the *Egyptians*. They add, That perhaps the Wind favoured by chance, the Design of *Moses*, and wonderfully increased the *Reflux* of the Sea, as the Writer of that History intimates, when he observes,

Y that

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that *The Lord caused the Sea to go back by a strong Wind.*

II. 'Tis not my business at present, to vindicate the veracity of *Moses*; it will be sufficient to shew, that their Assertion is contrary to his Words; for these Men are so confident of their Ability as to think, that they can maintain their Opinion by the very words of the Scripture. Wherefore I shall first explain the words of *Moses*, and before I shew how far the Power of God was concerned in this matter, I'll enquire into what could be done by the Power of Second Causes; and then I'll shew what what God himself did towards it, and what was done by the Second Causes; Lastly, I shall answer the Objections of our Adversaries.

III. God speaks thus to *Moses*, *Exod. 14. 16. But lift up thy Rod, and stretch out thine hand over the Sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the Sea.* It appears from Verse 20, 21. That *Moses* received those orders towards the Evening. Then *Moses* obeying God's Orders, smote the Sea, but it was not presently divided; for thus we find Verse 21. *And Moses stretched out his hand over the Sea, and the Lord caused the Sea to go back by a strong Wind all the Night, and made the Sea dry Land, and the Waters were divided.* When therefore *Moses* smote the Sea, there arose a strong Wind, which divided the Waters by degrees; for *Mo-*
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ses himself says, that the Wind drove back the Waters of the Sea *all that Night*, that is, almost all the Night; for the *Egyptians* were already gone into the Sea, in pursuit of the *Israelites*, in the *Morning Watch*, as he says V. 24.

'Tis well known, that the *Hebrews* divided the Night into three *Watches*; which being so, and seeing the Sacred History tells us, that the Sea return'd in the *Morning-watch*; 'tis likely, that the Wind blew almost 12 Hours together, from Sun-setting to Sun-rising: for the *Israelites* departed a little after the *Equinox* of the Spring. If we knew in what Watch of the Day or Night the Sea covered the Shores, or retired from them, we might explain this matter more accurately. But seeing the Sea Ebs and Flows in twelve Hours, 'tis likely, that it began to go back in the beginning of the Night, and that the *Reflux* was hastened and encreased by a strong Wind: but the next Tide was slower, the same Wind blowing still, and keeping back the Waves for some time; during which interval of time, the *Israelites* went through the dry Channel of the Sea. Let us suppose, for Example, that the Sea being return'd to the South, was to flow again towards the North, about the beginning of the Second Watch, if there had been no Wind; the Sea might have gone back, before the Second Watch, by reason of the Violence of the Wind, and not have returned to the Northern Shores of the *Red Sea* but some Hours la-

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ter; so that the *Israelites* might go over during the whole Second Watch; that is, during four Hours at least. Indeed they were already gone through the Sea, before the Morning-watch, in which all the *Egyptians* went into the Channel and were Drowned.

Now that we may understand how so many Thousands of Men might go through the *Red Sea* in so short a time, we ought to consider two things; First, that the extremity of that Gulph is very narrow, as 'tis granted by all those, who wrote about it, and not above two Miles broad. It was therefore no difficult thing for the *Israelites*, though they were so numerous, to go a great pace through the Channel of the Sea in a few Hours, which otherwise could not be understood, if it was broader. From whence also it follows, that the Sea going back towards the South, leaves not only the Shores dry, but its very Channel, because of the narrowness of the place, unless it be deeper in some places. I think there is no need I should prove, that the *Israelites* went through it at the further end of the Gulph, seeing it plainly appears that they did, from the situation of the place in which they encamped, as it is described *Exod. 14. 2.*

Secondly, It ought to be observed, that there was no need the *Israelites* should run away in Battle array, and in a long File. A great space having been dried by the Wind, they might go over in a large Front, as the *Egyptians*

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ans tried to do it after them; for the whole Army of the *Egyptians* had not been drowned, if few of them had gone together, seeing those that were beyond, had been at a great distance from those that were in the Front. But all the *Egyptians* were drowned, not one excepted; from whence it is manifest, that they went into the Channel of the Sea in a large Front.

IV. But I must consider more carefully the strength of the Wind which blew upon the Sea, *Exod. 14. 29. The Children of Israel, says Moses, walked upon dry Land in the midst of the Sea, and the Waters were a Wall unto them, on their right hand and on their left.* Which words ought not to be taken in a literal sence, nor those which we find *Exod. 15. 8. With the blast of thy Nostrils the Waters were gathered together: the Floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the Sea.* Who sees not that this is a Figurative Speech? For 1. God blows not with his *Nostrils*, nor did *Moses* believe he did, who teaches every where, that God hath no humane shape, 2. There is a great difference between a Heap of Corn and a bulk of Ice; nor could the driving of the Waters into the Ocean be compared to both, but in a Figurative sence, from whence it appears, that neither of them can be understood in a proper sence. 3. Had the Waters been congealed on both sides, there had been no need of a *Strong Wind* blowing all that Night, to uphold its Weight; for from the

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time the Water was divided, and congealed on both sides, it could not return into the middle Channel, but by the melting of the Ice. In like manner; the Water might be said to be as *as a Wall* unto the *Israelites*, because they could not go through it, on the Right hand, or on the Left; nor does any thing hinder, but there might be some Water on their Left Hand, in deep Pits, tho' the greatest part of it was removed to the Right Hand, by the Ebbing of the Sea, and the Ford through which they went was left dry. Thus *Nabum* 3.8. the Sea is said to be *a wall* to the City of *No*. *Art thou better* says the Prophet, *than populous No, that was situate among the Rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the Sea, and her wall was from the Sea.*

I think therefore, that such was the Division of the Waters of the Red Sea, that when the Wind, which encreased its Ebbing, had driven all the Waters, except that which remained in deep Pits, from the further end of the Gulph towards its Mouth, there appeared a large Ford over against the *Israelites*, through which they went to the opposite Shore; which could the more easily happen, because that Sea being full of Fords, when there happens a greater Reflux then ordinarily, those Fords are left dry; tho' as I shall shew hereafter, the Wind which God raised, drove the Sea farther then ever it was before, or hath been since, that we know of.

Most of those, who described that Sea, say that 'tis Fordable. They also say that it hath

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a violent Ebbing and Flowing. *P. Belonius* Observ. Book II. ch. 67. Speaking of a Town call'd now *Tor*, says, That it is Situated on a high place, for the Sea swells sometimes so much, that it overflows the Fields, and surrounds the Town with its Waters. Nor can it be otherwise in a Narrow Streight, especially when it reaches from South to North; for the Sea flows from the South, thro' a Narrow Passage with great violence, and having no room to Expatiate, it must needs be high: on the contrary when it Ebbs, it must of necessity leave many Fords empty, and the extremity of the Golph almost dry.

However a place out of *Psalms* 136. v. 13. may be objected against my Hypothesis. There 'tis said, *That God divided the Red Sea into Parts*: which words seem to imply that the Waters were so divided by the Wind, as to be driven on the right hand and on the left. But they might be said *to be divided into Parts*, if the Water remain'd on both sides, tho' it was not heap'd up by the strength of the Wind; for the Water, which return'd towards the South, was separated from that which remain'd in the Northern Pits: Which Water left in those Pits, may be call'd a *Part*, because it was separated from the rest of the Water by the violence of the Wind.

We read in the Annals of *Geneva*, that in the Year MCCCCXC. the South-wind blew with so great a Violence, that the Water of the *Rhone*, (a most swift River,) flowing from the

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Leman Lake to the South, stood still a quarter of an Hour. In like manner the Wind might encrease the Motion of the Ebbing Sea, and stop its Impetuosity when it flowed again. It was observed in *Holland*, in the Year MDCLXXII. that the Ebbing of the Sea lasted Twelve Hours, which hindred the Descent of the English: whether this was the Effect of the Wind, or some other cause, is not well known. Why therefore could not the Ebbing of the Red Sea last longer than it usually did, through the Divine Will, and return Later to the same Shores?

V. Having thus explain'd the Words of *Moses* which concern the thing itself, it will not be needless to enquire from what part of Heaven the Wind blew. *The Lord*, says *Moses*, *caused the Sea to go back by a strong East-Wind all that night*, as our Translation renders it. But I am of Opinion the *Hebrew* word *Kadim* cannot here signifie an *East-Wind*, because such a Wind was fitter to drive the Floods to the Shore, wherein the *Israelites* were, than to divide the Waters; unless we suppose that it blew only on a certain part of the Sea, so as to hinder the Waters from running in the middle. But who can apprehend how so many thousands of Men could, I will not say, stand in the Channel of the Sea, but go thro' it in so short a time, whilst so violent a Whirl-wind blew in their Faces?

I should think therefore that the Word *Kadim*

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dim denotes not that part of Heaven from whence this Wind blew, but a *Kialent Wind*, from whencesoever it blew. Nor did *Moses* add the word *strong*, because the Wind call'd *Kadim* is not commonly a violent one; but because the Wind, which drove the Waters of the Red Sea towards the Ocean, was extremely violent. The word *Kadim* signifies a violent Wind, *Psal.* 48. 8. *Ezech.* 27. 26. *Job* 27. 21. *Jer.* 18. 17. *Isa.* 27. 8. *Jon.* 4. 8. we may therefore understand by the word *Kadim* a North-wind. Nor could any other Wind open a passage to the *Israelites* thro' the Fords of the Sea, as I have shewed.

VI. The thing it self favours my opinion, as we have seen, and no strong Argument can be brought against it from the words of *Moses*. Some therefore will perhaps endeavour to confute it some other way, *Viz.* by accusing it of Novelty. But I may shelter my self under the Authority of *Josephus*, who seems to have had the like thoughts, when he compared the Passage of the *Israelites* with *Alexander's* March thro' the Sea of *Pamphylia*, in these words, Book II. towards the End: *No Body will admire that strange Story, that Men, who liv'd many Ages ago, and were free from malice found a way to escape, even thro' the Sea, whether God would have it so, or whether it happen'd by chance; seeing the Sea of Pamphylia gave way to Alexander King of Macedonia, who liv'd not long ago, and open'd a Passage to him,*

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him; when he had no other, when God design'd to destroy the Empire of the Persians. I shall not enquire whether those Two Events may be compar'd in every thing: 'tis false that *Alexander* had no other way, and they differ in other things: But however it appears from those words that *Josephus* believe, not without reason, that *Alexander's* Passage was like that of the *Israelites* in this, *Viz.* in his going thro' the Sea, when the Wind turn'd, which he could not do, whilst it blew. I shall here set down the words of *Arrianus*, who relates the thing thus, Book I. *He lead those who were with him thro' the Sea all along the Shore. No Body can go that way, but when the North-Wind blows; but if the South-Wind blows hard, none can go thro' the Shore. It happen'd then, not without the Will of God (as he, and those that were with him said) that a violent South-Wind turn'd into the North, and so he had a quick and easie Passage.* It appears from those words of *Arrianus*, who relates the thing, as *Josephus* understood it, that this latter Historian had the same thoughts as I have concerning the Passage of the *Israelites* thro' the Red Sea.

Josephus might also have added out of *Livy* Book XXVI. Ch. 45. if he knew it, what that Historian says concerning the taking of *New Carthage* by *P. Scipio Africanus*, to stop thereby the Mouth of the *Romans*, who denied the Truth of the History of the *Hebrews*. The Words of *Livy* run thus: *As soon as he was told*

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told the Sea Ebbed, he lead his Army to it, because he heard from some Fisher Men, who had been there in some light Boats, and were gone thro' the Fords, when their Boats stuck, that he might easily go to the Wall of the Town a foot. It was about the middle of the day, and besides the Water was going back according to its ordinary Ebbing, a violent North-Wind arose blowing the same way the Sea Ebbed, which so laid open the Fords, that in some places the Water came only to the Belly, and in other places scarce to the Knee. Scipio having carefully observ'd this, and ascribing it as a Prodigy to the Protection of the Gods, who open'd a new way for the Romans thro' the Sea, he commanded his Souldiers to follow Neptune as their Guide. But neither Scipio nor Alexander could know that the North-Wind would blow, when it was necessary for them: And seeing the Providence of God ruled the Actions of the Heathens, not only those of the *Hebrews*, nothing hinders but he might sometimes designedly help Natural Causes on their behalf.

VII. It appears also from the Death of the *Egyptians*, that the Sea was divided, as I have said. First, *Moses* says, that when the *Israelites* went into the Sea, *The Egyptians pursued and went in after them, in the Night-time, to the midst of the Sea, even all Pharaoh's Horses, his Chariots, and Horse-men, Exod. 14. 23.* The *Egyptians* believed that the *Israelites* took hold of the Opportunity of an Ebbing, which was
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greater than it used to be; and that therefore they ought presently to pursue them, least the Passage should be stopt by the return of the Waters. Tho' the *Egyptians* were transported with anger, yet, had they suspected that it was a Prodigy, they had certainly never been so mad as to go into the Channel of the Sea; and they might have seen that it was undoubtedly a Miracle, were it not that they might with some likelihood ascribe the thing to an Extraordinary Reflux.

When the whole Army of the *Egyptians* came into the Sea, and the *Israelites* got to the opposite Shore, that is, in the Third Watch of the Night, as we learn from what follows, *Moses* was commanded to smite the Sea, which being done, *Exod. 14. 27. The Sea return'd to its strength, when the morning appear'd.* Which seems not to have happen'd by degrees, but God made use of an extraordinary South-Wind, which brought back with a great violence and in a very short time the Waves, which stood still by the strength of the North-Wind. This we learn from *Moses's Song, Exod. 15. 10. Thou didst blow with thy Wind, the Sea covered them: They sank as lead in the mighty Waters, &c.* If the Waters were congealed and heaped up on both sides, what need was there of a Wind, to make them return to their place? As they stood up only by the Will of God; they might return into their Channel by the same Will, provided God would have recall'd the Efficacy

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Efficacy of his Power ; for they had dropt down by their weight like melted Ice.

Lest the *Egyptians* should avoid by flying the violence of the Reflux, besides the South-Wind by which it was hasten'd, *Moses* says, That God *Troubled the Host of the Egyptians, and took off their Chariot-wheels, that they drave them heavily*, *Exod. 14. 24, 25*. That we may the better understand this, we must remember that the Army of the *Egyptians* was made up only of Chariots and Horse-men. For *Pharaoh* brought with him no Infantry, to overtake more easily the *Israelites*, nor did he want any, seeing he might easily rout an unarm'd People only with his Chariots and Horse-men. Besides the March of the Horse-men and Chariots was made slower by a secret Efficacy of the Divine Power, Three things might make that Passage more difficult to the *Egyptians* than to the *Israelites*.

1. There might be in some Places abundance of Mires too deep to drive Chariots and Horses thro' them without great trouble ; whereas Men a Foot might easily get over them, especially the *Israelites*, who were used to wander with their Flocks in the Marshes of *Egypt*. Tho' the Bottom of the Sea is not the same every where, yet no Body will wonder, that I say there might be here and there some Miry Places in a Space, that was some Miles Broad, a little while after the Sea left it.

2. If there were no Mires in some places there
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was abundance of deep Sand, in which Wheels will sink deeply, and thro' which Horses can go but slowly. *Diodorus Siculus* says Book III. There is a vast quantity of Dirt and Sand in that Sea, and that the Floods sometimes carry so much Sand about the Ships that Sail in it, that they stick fast in the Ground. That Sand hindered without doubt the Chariots and Horses from going fast. If it be objected that *Moses* says several times that the *Israelites* went thro' the Sea as thro' a *Dry Land*; I answer, It ought not to be so understood, as if the Channel of the Sea had not been so much as moist and dirty. The Land is said to be *Dry*, because there was no Waves upon it, and it is opposed not to Moistness but to Water, as *Gen. 1. 9. And God said, let the Waters under the Heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the Dry Land appear — and God called the Dry Land Earth.* See also Chap. 8. 13. *Philo* therefore laid too great a stress upon that Word, when he said that the *Isrealites* went thro' the Sea as thro' a way paved with Stones; for, (as he goes on) *the Sand grew hard, and made one solid Body.* Miracles have been often invented, (to explain some Words of Scripture upon which they put too literal a Sense) of which the Holy Writers never so much as dream'd.

3. The Bottom of the Sea being uneven, and full of Rocks and † Shrubs, could not give a

† See *Theophras. Hist. of Plants. Book. IV. ch. 8.*

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Free passage to the Chariots. Nay, 'twas almost impossible for those, who drove the Chariots, and hastened to pursue the *Israelites* in the Night time, and then to make their escape to the *Egyptian* Shores, not to encumber and hinder one another, and even to overturn their Chariots, and break the Wheels against the Rocks. Now some Chariots overturned or broke, were sufficient to disturb the whole Army, and it could go but slowly, whilst their Ranks were broke, and every Horseman endeavoured to go faster than another. This *Moses* seems to teach us in the words I have quoted. All which things I have mentioned, did without doubt hinder the march of the Horse and Chariots.

When the *Israelites* saw this, besides they perhaps observed that the Wind was turned, knowing that the Sea would presently flow in, they began to think more seriously of making their escape. Then at last they perceived, that the God of the *Israelites* was not less Powerful in the Sea, then he had been in *Egypt*. So that condemning their rashness, they turned back, and made haste to the *Egyptian* Shoar; but the Waves breaking upon them they were Drowned. *Josephus* not only says, that the Water of the Sea was driven on the *Egyptians* by the Wind, but also, that there arose at the same time a violent Storm, which perhaps he learned from the *Egyptian* Priests of his time. The *Egyptians* added, that their Ancestors were
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forced to come home, and leave off pursuing the *Israelites*, by reason of the Storms, as it appears from *Justin*, Book 26. Ch. 2. But *Moses* says, that they all Perished in the Sea, and that not one of them escaped to bring the News of their Calamity. From whence one may observe by the bye, that *Josephus* omitted that part of the Tradition of the *Egyptians*, because it was contrary to the History of *Moses*; but willingly alledged, according to his Custom, that part which was not inconsistent with it.

VIII. If the Histories of *Manetho*, and of some others, who wrote the Antiquities of the *Egyptians* were extant, we might perhaps find in them several Footsteps of the Truth, which *Josephus*, who made use of them did not see. Indeed 'tis certain, as several Learned Men have observed, that in the Fragments which he hath preserved to us, there are many things which he understood not well. There is something in *Strabo*, Book XVI. which seems to belong to the passage of the *Israelites* thro' the Red Sea, tho' he says it happened in a Neighbouring Country. *A wonderful and extraordinary thing*, says that Author, *is reported to have happened in the Shoar between Tyre and Ptolemais*. 'Tis said, *That the Inhabitants of Ptolemais, having engaged in a battle with General Sarpedon; and being put to flight, were overwhelm'd as they fled, by the Sea coming upon them as a Tide; and that some were carried into the Sea, and others left dead in some low Places*. Afterwards, when
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the Sea Ebb'd, their Bodies were found lying promiscuously among dead Fishes. What happen'd in the Red Sea, was transferred to the Shoars of Tyre, and disguised with false Circumstances. The word *Sarpedon* was also falsely accounted a Proper Name; for *Sar-Phadon* in Hebrew, signifies the *Head of Deliverance*, or of those who are Delivered, which *Encomium* suits *Moses* very well. *Diodorus Siculus* heard the *Troglo-ditæ* report a like thing. 'Tis reported, says he, by the *Ichthyophagi*, who live near that Sea, as they have it from their Ancestors, that there having been a GREAT REFLUX, the whole Channel of the Gulph was dried up, and lookt Green: And when the Earth had been seen at the bottom, a violent Flowing came in of a sudden, and restored the Channel to its former State. Which Words describe the thing well enough, as I have shewed that it happened.

Indeed, if the *Ichthyophagi* said nothing else, they were more modest than some Christians, who having made themselves Masters of those places, have corrupted every thing with abundance of feigned Tales; an Example of which we find in *Grosius*. Book I. Ch. 10. There remains still, says he, some certain Monuments of that event. For the Track of the Chariots and Wheels may be seen, not only in the shore, but also at the bottom, as far as the sight can reach, and if it be confounded, either by chance or out of curiosity, it is of a sudden divinely restored to

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its former state, by the Winds and Waves; that whosoever learns not to fear God, by applying himself to Religion, which he knows may be terrified by an ancient Example of God's Anger.

IX. I have hitherto sufficiently shewed, how God opened a passage for the *Israelites* through the *Red Sea*; but I have not shewed yet what was done by the ordinary Laws of Nature, and what by an extraordinary effect of the Divine Power: What happens after the latter manner, is called a *Miracle* in the Style of Christians, but Events of the former kind go not by that Name. Again, There are two sorts of things which God does above the order of Nature; some are such, as cannot be ascribed to natural Causes, as things are now: For Example, If a body heavier than another goes not below it, as if an Iron thrown into the Water sinks not, if a humane Body remains in the midst of Flames without being hurt in the least, and the like. Others being considered in themselves, might be lookt upon as the Effects of natural Causes, such are an extraordinary Wind, and Reflux of the Sea. Natural Causes may produce them, and often do it: But if God does those things and the like, by an Act of his Will, without using natural Causes, and without expecting the Order he established from the beginning of the World; then, I say, what was not a Miracle by its Nature, is rightly called so. If God by his special Will raises a Wind, when

no Wind had risen by the ordinary Course of Nature; and drives the Waves much farther than they used to go, when the Reflux had not been greater than it used to be by the ordinary Laws of Nature, those things are call'd Miracles, and are really so.

There might be therefore Miracles of both sorts in what happen'd to the Red Sea. Perhaps the North-Wind had not blown, if God had not raised it; and caused the South-Wind to cease. Perhaps the strength of that Wind was so great by the Will of God, that no Natural Wind could have removed the Sea so far. The same may be said of the Reflux; Perhaps the Sea had not returned back when it did, if God had not removed it, nor would it, by its natural Ebbing, have gone back so far as to leave a Passage Large enough for so many Thousands of Men.

This therefore must be granted to us, even by obstinate Men, that there might be some *Miracles* properly so call'd in that Event; provided the thing happen'd, as 'tis related, which I think I may now take for granted. But it will be ask'd, how shall we know that those things happen'd, not by Natural Causes, but by an Extraordinary Effect of God's Power? In answer to which, I say, First, that the Extraordinary strength of the Wind, and the Reflux which was so great, that perhaps the like was never seen, shew the Power of God in them. Second-

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ly, if nothing Extraordinary happen'd, the *Egyptians* had no reason to rejoyce, nor the *Israelites* to be Terrified, when they saw themselves shut up between the Sea and the Mountains, for they might escape by expecting the Reflux of the Sea; nor is it likely that so many Thousands of Men knew nothing of the Nature of the Ocean, from which their former Habitation was but a few days journey distant. Lastly, it was also a *Miracle* in this respect, *Viz.* Because *Moses*, who could expect nothing else but an Ordinary Reflux, foretold the *Israelites* that the *Egyptians* should perish, but that they themselves should escape without any damage. *Fear ye not*, says he, *stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you, to day: for the Egyptians, whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more, for ever.* Could any Humane Prudence foresee that, and that there would be a place in the Channel left dry, and so large, that so many Thousands of Men might go thro' it in few Hours without any danger; and that the *Egyptians* should be so blinded as to follow the *Israelites*, thinking there was nothing Extraordinary in the matter? If it be said, that God revealed this to *Moses*, we have what we desire, for the very Revelation will be a great *Miracle*. When a *Miracle* is foretold, before it happens, 'tis a most certain *Criterion* of such a *Miracle*; for from thence it may be evidently inferred, that
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God bears a Special Love to Him, whom he thus forewarns; and that an Extraordinary thing happen'd, which could not be known if God had not been pleas'd to foretel it.

Indeed if an Event, which is not manifestly above the Power of Nature, were not foretold, it could not be said, after it hath happen'd, to be most certainly a Miracle wrought in the behalf of those, to whom it hath been beneficial. For who sees not that a prudent Man may suddenly make use of an unexpected Event tho' it happens not in his behalf? Wherefore tho' the Wind had not turn'd without a Miracle, when *Alexander* pass'd at the foot of Mount *Climax*, yet he could not boast of it as of a special favour of the Deity, for how could he shew that God hath done it in his behalf? He went thither to see whether he could go that way, designing either to stay sometime till that way might be passable, or to lead his Army another way. This *Strabo* Book XIV. intimates clearly enough; *There is a streight of the Sea near Phaselis, says he, thro' which Alexander led his Army. For there is a Mountain call'd Climax, which lies near the Sea of Pamphylia, and leaves a narrow passage in the Shore, which is Dry when the Sea is Calm, so that Travellers may go thro' it, but when the Sea flows in, it is for the greatest part cover'd with Water. The way thro' the Mountain goes a great way about, and is difficult: They go thro' the Shore in fair Weather.* Then he adds, *Alexander hap-*
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pen'd to be there in Stormy Weather, and because he relied much on Fortune, he sat out before the Waves, were calm'd, and so he and his Army marched all the day in the Waters to the Belly.

From whence it clearly appears that *Alexander* boldly made use of that opportunity, which had been more convenient, if he had not been so hasty; and therefore if he boasted that God had open'd a way for his Army, 'twas a meer *Stratagem* he used to encourage his Soldiers. Which perhaps was the reason why *Alexander* himself made no mention of any Miracle wrought in his behalf, in his Epistles, wherein he spoke of that Expedition, as we learn from *Plutarch* in his Life. *His March thro' Pamphylia*, says he, *hath been a Subject which many Historians have treated Eloquently to raise admiration, and swell their Style, as if the Sea had gone back by the Will of God—But Alexander himself in his Epistles mentions no Miracle, and only says, that having set out from Phaselis, he went thro' Mount Climax.*

From whence it appears, how great a difference there is between the Passage of *Alexander* thro' the Shore of the Sea of *Pamphilia*, and the Passage of the *Israelites* thro' the Red Sea, nor to say that *Alexander* might have gone another way, *Viz.* thro' the Mountain, whereas the *Israelites* could not go thro' the Mountains. The approach of the Soldiers of *Publius Scipio* to the Wall of *Carthage* does not less differ from
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the Passage of the *Israelites*; and tho' that Cunning Man ascribed it as a Miracle to the Gods, to be more chearfully obeyed by his Soldiers; yet he durst not assure them that the Town would be certainly taken, and if that *Strategem* of his had not well succeeded, his vain undertaking had not been perhaps so much as mention'd in History.

X. I think I have sufficiently clear'd both the History of the Passage of the *Israelites* thro' the Red Sea, and what *Josephus* says concerning it; whom I have not alledged, as if I relied much upon his Authority, in things of that nature; but because some Learned Men, whose Authority ought not to be slighted in the Common-wealth of Learning, are more moved with his Testimony than with Arguments. They and their like Object sometimes the Novelty of an Opinion, which they read no where else, as if it were a certain sign of Falshood, and can't rest contented without the Testimony of an Ancient Author. But I have especially endeavour'd to satisfy those, to whom too great a Love of Prodigies and wonders of some Mean and Imprudent Interpreters hath given occasion to doubt of the Truth of some Ancient Histories. For I have often observed that the Doubts of some Men, who are no Fools, arise from their judging of very Ancient Histories, not after a careful Examination, but according to the common opinion of those with whom

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whom they live. Which is certainly very unjust; for can any thing be more repugnant to Justice and Equity than for a Man to give his Verdict, not as the Cause, which he ought to know perfectly, requires, but as he, that pleads that cause, defends it. If any one thinks I have not well pleaded the Cause I rook in hand, I shall be glad to be better informed, and as willing to hear another as if I had never thought of, nor writ on this Subject.

~~I have not well pleaded the Cause I rook in hand, I shall be glad to be better informed, and as willing to hear another as if I had never thought of, nor writ on this Subject.~~

They and their like Object sometimes the reality of an Opinion, which they read no where else, as if it were a certain sign of falsehood, and can't well consent without the Testimony of an Ancient Author. But I have especially of Aristotle, to whom not great a Love of Fables and wonders of fables, and independent Intemperance hath given occasion to doubt of the Truth of some Ancient Histories. For I have often observed that the Doctors of some Ages who are no fools, still from their judging of very Ancient Histories, not after a careful Examination, but according to the common opinion of their with

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